ANGEL & FAITH™

CHRISTOS GAGE

REBEKAH ISAACS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
JOSS WHEDON

ANGEL & FAITH™

SEASON 9, VOLUME 3

Angel is leaning hard into his personal cycle of always seeking to redeem past wrongs, and after his most grave mistake yet—the murder of mentor and Watcher Rupert Giles—he has undertaken a quest to bring Giles back from the dead. Luckily, Angel has the support and friendship of Faith, a Slayer who can watch his back and also make sure he doesn't take things too far . . .

The demon Eyghon has appeared in London, giving Angel the opportunity he's been waiting for—the chance to capture the final piece of Giles's soul. For Faith, her mission to support Angel takes a turn for the worse when her Slayer comrades discover her connection to the ensouled vampire. When they unknowingly become involved with Eyghon, worse becomes worst when Slayers turn into zombies . . . and much to Angel's chagrin, Spike is called in for backup.

But just as Angel's quest comes to its final phase, the Big Bads Whistler, Pearl, and Nash unleash their own ultimate plan to release a virus that could kill billions while forcing the evolution of life on earth . . . Angel, Faith, and their network of supporters are all on deck for the culmination of Season 9.

"Interior artwork is excellent. Covers are fantastic."

—TECHNORATI

"I've said it before and I'll say it again: if Gage and Isaacs work on a comic together, I'll buy it, no questions asked. As always, good times."

—COMIC BOOK RESOURCES

"The title of this story [*What You Want, Not What You Need*] is partly wrong. This is what you want, and what you need. It's a blast! A+"

—SCIFIPULSE

"Spike really does bring the fun . . . ! Gage demonstrates his talent for writing Whedon's characters by not missing a beat with everyone's favorite blonde, British vampire."

—FANBOY COMICS

DARK HORSE BOOKS

ANGEL
&FAITH
™

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SEASON 9 VOLUME 3

CHRISTOS GAGE

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
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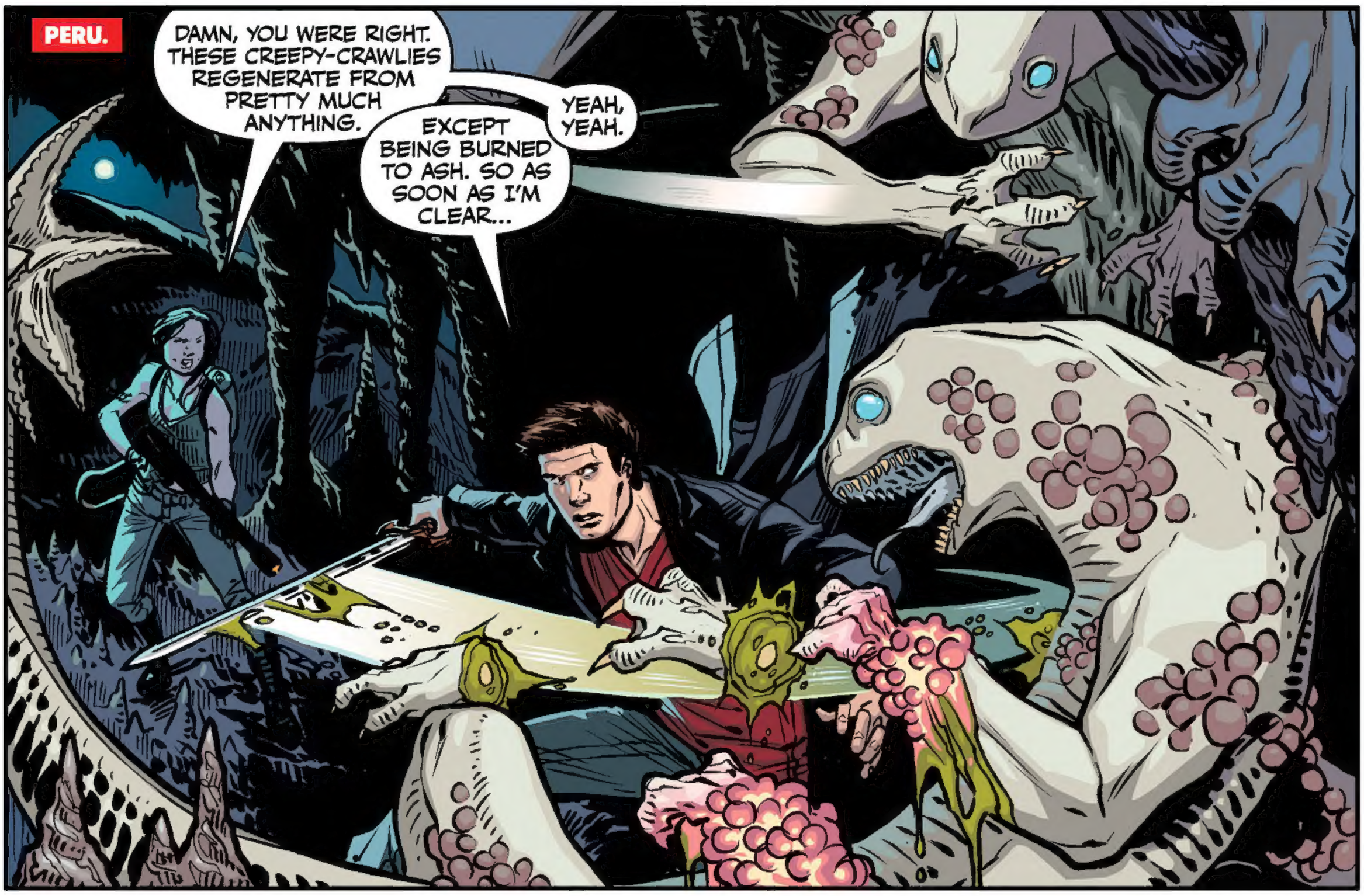
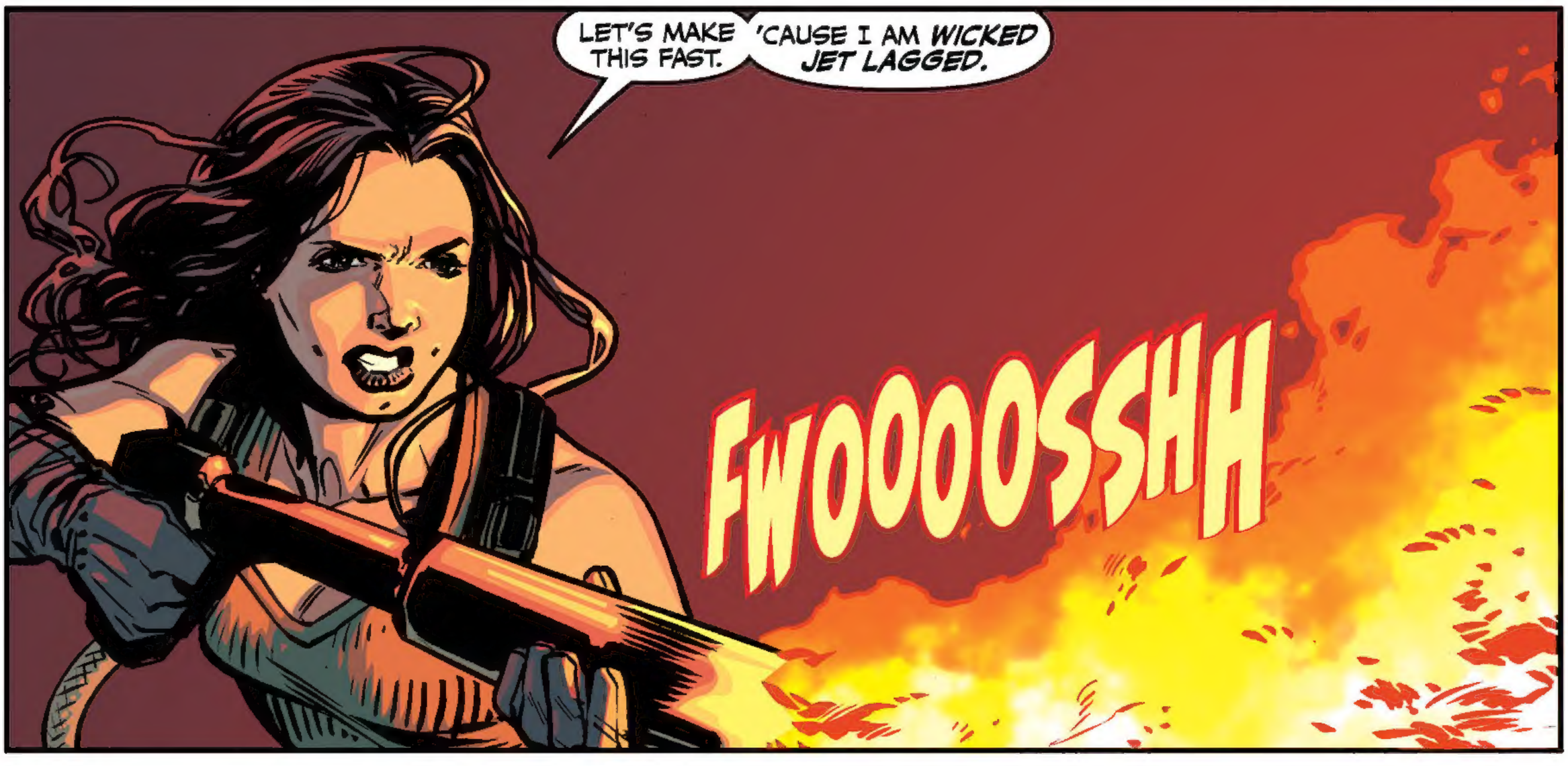


DEATH AND CONSEQUENCES

PART 1 OF 4



MOVING FAST IS THE ONLY WAY WE SURVIVE THIS.

ALMOST THERE. GET READY...

...THIS WON'T SLOW IT DOWN LONG!

SHHKK

CHHRREEE

NEITHER WILL *THIS*, IT LOOKS LIKE. MOVE YOUR UNDEAD ASS.

GOT IT.

I'M RUNNING ON *FUMES* HERE, ANGEL.

WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

EMPTY!

SPUT

I'M NOT.

FIRE IN THE HOLE.

BRRMMMM

I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT SOUNDED DIRTY.

I MEAN, SERIOUSLY, IF I WORKED DEMOLITIONS I'D BE GIGGLING LIKE A *TWELVE-YEAR-OLD* EVERY TIME I SAID IT.

IF YOU WORKED DEMOLITIONS I'D BE RUNNING FOR MY LIFE.

SO THAT'S THE MCGUFFIN?

THE *CROWN OF COILS.* MOST PEOPLE THINK THOSE THINGS REGENERATE BIOLOGICALLY, BUT IT'S REALLY BECAUSE OF *THIS.* AND IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S STILL CHARGED.

GRAB ME ONE OF THEIR VICTIMS. NOT A FRESH ONE.

SO MUCH FOR RESPECTING THE DEAD.

THE GUY WAS WITH A DRUG CARTEL. RESPECT ONLY GOES SO FAR.

SO HE WAS SCUM. HE STILL HAD *FAMILY.* PEOPLE WONDERING WHERE HE IS...IF HE'LL EVER COME BACK.

MAYBE THEY'D WANT TO GIVE HIM A DECENT BURIAL. NOT SEE HIM USED AS A *LAB RAT.*

WE HAVE TO KNOW THIS'LL WORK. WE NEED AN *ADULT HUMAN BEING,* NOT A RABBIT. MAYBE THIS IS CROSSING A LINE, BUT IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME. AND IT WON'T BE THE LAST.

LOOK, NOW THAT THE LIZARDS ARE BURIED, WE CAN TELL THE POLICE ABOUT THIS PLACE. GIVE THE FAMILIES SOME CLOSURE.

IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH, MOVE OVER, I'LL--

I *GOT* IT. DO YOUR THING ALREADY.

COME ON...

I'LL BE DAMNED.

HE'S STILL DEAD. WITHOUT A SOUL, THE BODY'S JUST GOING TO ROT ALL OVER AGAIN. BUT WE'VE ALMOST GOT THAT SOLVED, TOO.

I KNOW WHERE THE REST OF GILES'S SOUL IS. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET IT.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS WON'T GO WRONG? LIKE WITH THE MOHRA BLOOD?

I *DON'T.* THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO LEAVE THE CROWN WITH ALASDAIR, SO HE CAN STUDY IT.

WE'VE GOT OTHER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT. STARTING WITH SOMETHING THAT'LL BE A LOT HARDER THAN THIS.

OH. RIGHT.

WE GOTTA DIG HIM UP.

MAN, YOU STILL DON'T GET ME *AT ALL.*

AH, YES. THE AGGRIEVED LAMENT OF YOUTH STRETCHING BACK TO *JAMES DEAN.*

FAITH, I WAS NOT INSULTING YOU.

MERELY POINTING OUT THAT, WHILE YOU *ARE* QUITE GUARDED WITH PEOPLE, ONCE YOU *DO* BECOME ATTACHED TO THEM, YOUR LOYALTY IS *EXTREME.*

TO THE POINT THAT YOU PLACE THEIR INTERESTS ABOVE YOUR OWN. EVEN WHEN IT CAUSES YOU HARM.

JESUS. IF I KNEW YOU WERE GONNA GET ALL DR. DREW, I'D'A NEVER LET YOU JUMP MY TRAIN. MENTORING PROBLEM SLAYERS WAS *MY IDEA,* REMEMBER?

INDEED IT WAS, AND A *GOOD* ONE. GIVEN THE STATE OF THE WORLD, I STILL BELIEVE IT IS *CRUCIAL* THESE GIRLS RECEIVE GUIDANCE.

BUT YOU'VE SEEN FIRSTHAND THERE ARE THOSE WHO *CAN'T BE HELPED.* AS ONE WHO'S WORKED WITH SLAYERS FOR...WELL, THE EXACT AMOUNT OF TIME ISN'T RELEVANT... I PROMISE YOU THERE *WILL BE MORE.*

THOSE SO *DAMAGED* THEY CAN ONLY DRAG ANYONE WHO SEEKS TO AID THEM INTO THEIR MORASS OF PAIN AND DYSFUNCTION.

FAITH, I WOULD NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF IF I ALLOWED THAT TO HAPPEN TO YOU.

DAMN, G. YOU ARE, LIKE, THE *PRINCE* OF DRAGGING A TWO-SECOND CONVO INTO A SIX-HOUR MINISERIES.

LEMME SAVE SOME TIME. YOU--"WATCH YOUR ASS." ME--"COPY THAT." YOU--"GOOD. I'LL SHUT UP NOW."

WE COOL?

YES. WE ARE MOST DEFINITELY COOL.

LONDON. NOW.

KEEP AN EYE OUT. I CAN DO THIS ON MY OWN.

I HAVE SUPER-STRENGTH TOO, SHOWOFF.

WE DON'T NEED TO GET ARRESTED, IS ALL I'M SAYING.

SO DIG *FASTER.*

CHNK

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK.

JUST OPEN IT.

RRNNCHH

WHAT THE F--

WHERE THE HELL IS HE?

HOME OF FAITH LEHANE.

YOU *LOST OUR NEPHEW?*

WE DIDN'T *LOSE* HIM.

SEEING AS POOR RUPERT'S *DEAD*--I'M NOT GOING TO MENTION AT WHOSE HANDS--

YOURS.

--I FIND IT *EXTREMELY* DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE HE ABSCONDED ON HIS *OWN.*

THE GRAVE WAS UNTOUCHED. WE CHECKED CEMETERY RECORDS, SECURITY-CAM TAPES. IT'S BEEN THAT WAY SINCE HE WAS BURIED.

WHICH MEANS HIS BODY WAS STOLEN *BEFORE* THAT.

BY *WHO?*

WE WERE GOING TO ASK IF *YOU* HAD ANY IDEAS.

HOW *RUDE.* WE CERTAINLY DON'T ASSOCIATE WITH *ANYONE* WHO'D DO SOMETHING LIKE *THAT.*

WAIT. YES WE *DO,* DON'T WE?

RATHER A LOT.

MAKE A LIST. IT'S BEEN MONTHS. THE TRAIL AIN'T EXACTLY HOT.

WE GOTTA PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS ON THIS--

BAM BAM BAM

FAITH! WE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE!

AH, HELL...

IT'S NADIRA AND THE GIRLS. AND THEY LOOK PRETTY TWEAKED.

BUY ME A COUPLE SECONDS. I'LL LEAVE BY THE ROOF.

DAMN IT, FAITH!

WE *KNOW* ANGEL'S WITH YOU.

NOW OPEN THE DOOR BEFORE I *KICK IT IN.*

SINCE WHEN IS WHAT HAPPENS IN *MY HOUSE* ANY OF YOUR DAMN BUSINESS?

YOU *MADE* IT MY BUSINESS.

YOU *LIED TO ME* ABOUT KNOWING WHERE HE IS. THEN THE TWO OF YOU FOUGHT DRUSILLA BACK TO BACK, IN A BURNING CHURCH IN FRONT OF *DOZENS OF WITNESSES.*

HE *MURDERED AN ENTIRE UNIT OF SLAYERS* LAST YEAR. MY *SISTERS.*

HE WAS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF TWILIGHT. WHICH I KNOW YOU THINK WAS HIM, BUT IT WAS, LIKE, THIS MASSIVE COSMIC FORCE OF--

JESUS, EVEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT...

SHUT UP.

NONE OF THAT MATTERS. NOT RIGHT NOW.

WE'RE NOT HERE ABOUT SQUADS OF DEAD SLAYERS.

WE'RE HERE ABOUT *ONE.*

NOW ARE YOU GOING TO LET US IN OR NOT?

CLEARLY YOU HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS. COME ALONG, SOPHIE.

I'D QUITE LIKE TO WATCH--

OUT.

WE'VE BEEN WAITING DAYS FOR YOU TO GET BACK. KEEPING HER IN A ***FREEZER,*** LIKE A PIECE OF ***MEAT...***

W-WHAT...

WHAT ***HAPPENED?*** SHE WAS ***MURDERED.*** KILLED BY A VAMPIRE.

"DRUSILLA."

WHEN?

RIGHT AFTER YOU BLOODY ***LET HER GO!***

I DIDN'T--

HER FOLLOWERS *ATTACKED* US. SHE RAN. WE TRIED TO FIND HER, BUT THEY WERE CHASING US. BY THE TIME WE LOST THEM, THERE WAS NOTHING WE COULD--

OH, OF COURSE NOT. YOU KILL DEMONS AND MONSTERS AND ELDER GODS LIKE YOU'RE SWATTING BLOODY FLIES, BUT *ONE VAMPIRE* KEEPS GETTING AWAY FROM YOU.

ONE VAMPIRE YOU *"SIRED,"* ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU LEECHES CALL IT? ONE VAMPIRE YOU *SHAGGED.* ONE VAMPIRE YOU SPENT *A HUNDRED YEARS SLAUGHTERING PEOPLE WITH.*

NOW ANOTHER GIRL'S DEAD. ONE MORE BODY ON THE PILE. AND HERE YOU ARE, FULL OF EXCUSES, REASONS WHY IT'S *NOT YOUR DAMN FAULT--*

NADIRA.

RIGHT.

WE'RE NOT HERE FOR THAT.

WE'RE NOT EVEN HERE FOR YOU.

WE'RE HERE FOR *HER.*

HER NAME WAS MARIANNE. SHE WAS TWENTY-THREE.

AND SHE WAS THE *BEST* OF US.

NOT AS A SLAYER. POOR KID NEVER HAD A KILLER INSTINCT. THE MOVES WERE OKAY TECHNICALLY, BUT YOU COULD TELL HER HEART WASN'T IN IT.

SHE WAS THE KIND WHO TAKES SPIDERS OUTSIDE INSTEAD OF STEPPING ON 'EM. ONE OF THE FEW GIRLS I TRIED TO TALK *OUT* OF THE LIFE. BUT SHE WOULDN'T HEAR IT.

FUNNY THING IS, I DON'T THINK SHE STAYED BECAUSE OF THE SLAYING. I THINK SHE STAYED BECAUSE OF THE *SLAYERS.*

SHE'D LOST HER PARENTS. DIDN'T HAVE FAMILY. ALL OF A SUDDEN SHE DID.

AND SHE COULD SEE YOU NEEDED HER AS MUCH AS SHE NEEDED YOU.

SHE HAD A CRAP LITTLE FLAT. USED TO LET US STAY THERE. AS MANY AS NEEDED IT.

THE GIRLS WHOSE PARENTS TOSSED THEM OUT FOR BEING *TOOLS OF SATAN,* OR WHATEVER.

THE ONES WHO'D BEEN THROUGH *HELL* AND NEEDED A PLACE TO BE WHERE NO ONE WOULD JUDGE THEM OR ASK THEM HOW THEY BLOODY *FELT.*

WE LOVED HER.

AND NOW SHE'S GONE.

BUT *YOU'RE* GOING TO *BRING HER* BACK.

W-WHAT?

WE'VE BEEN ASKING AROUND. ABOUT BOTH OF YOU. WHAT YOU'RE UP TO.

WE'VE TORN UP DEMON DENS FROM HERE TO SCOTLAND.

WE *KNOW.*

YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR A WAY TO RESURRECT THE WATCHER WHO USED TO LIVE HERE. RUPERT GILES.

AND RUMOR HAS IT YOU'VE *SUCCEEDED.* OR COME DAMN CLOSE.

WHY *HIM?* WHY DOES SOME OLD BLOKE DESERVE TO LIVE MORE THAN OUR FRIEND?

WOULD EVEN *HE* THINK THAT HE DOES?

OR IS THIS NOT ABOUT HIM AT ALL?

IS IT JUST ABOUT WHAT *YOU* WANT?

LET ME SPARE YOU ANSWERING. WHATEVER THIS RESURRECTION TRICK IS, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO USE IT ON HIM.

YOU'RE GOING TO USE IT ON *HER.*

OR I SWEAR TO GOD I WILL KILL YOU BOTH.

IT'S *NADIRA*, RIGHT?

LET ME ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS. ABOUT YOUR FRIEND.

DID SHE USE MAGIC MUCH? SPELLS, ARTIFACTS?

WHAT? NO. WHY WOULD SHE?

DID SHE HAVE TIES TO ANY MAGICAL BEINGS? DEMONS, WITCHES...

NO! SHE WAS A GIRL FROM CARDIFF WHO'D BARELY BEEN OUT OF BLOODY *WALES* UNTIL A YEAR AGO! SO WHAT?

I'M SORRY. I CAN'T HELP YOU.

WHAT WE'RE DOING WITH GILES... IT'S ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE HE WAS SO INVOLVED WITH MAGIC. THERE ARE ITEMS...BEINGS...THAT HAVE *CONNECTIONS* TO PARTS OF HIS SOUL.

AND EVEN WITH THAT, THERE'S ONE *IMPORTANT THING* THAT MAKES GILES DIFFERENT FROM ANYONE ELSE. THAT KEPT HIS SOUL FROM MOVING ON WHEN HE--

THRNCH

DON'T *LIE* TO ME! WE WERE CUT OFF FROM THE MAGIC DIMENSIONS WHEN THE *SEED* WAS DESTROYED! *NO ONE'S* SOUL CAN MOVE ON!

I'M PRETTY SURE IT DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY. DEATH IS A NATURAL PROCESS. I DON'T KNOW THE SPECIFICS, BUT SOULS STILL GO WHERE THEY BELONG WHEN SOMEONE DIES.

IT'S *NOT* MAGIC. I DON'T EXACTLY KNOW *HOW* IT WORKS, TO BE HONEST. BUT IT'S PART OF THE LIFE CYCLE. THAT DOESN'T GET INTERRUPTED JUST BECAUSE THE SEED'S GONE.

IFS AND MAYBES. HOW DO YOU *KNOW?*

YOU'RE NOT SOME WIZARD. YOU'RE NOT EVEN A WATCHER. YOU'RE JUST SAYING WHAT *YOU* WANT TO BE TRUE, YOU SELFISH *BASTARD!*

WELL, SINCE YOU ONLY GIVE A TOSS ABOUT YOURSELF, CONSIDER THIS. IF YOU CAN'T BRING HER BACK...OR *WON'T*... THIS ONLY GOES *ONE WAY.*

NADIRA, HANG ON. I GOT A TEXT FROM THAT GHOUL I LEANED ON.

PLAN B'S A GO. BUT WE NEED TO MOVE FAST, WHILE THE INTEL'S STILL GOOD.

FINE.

YOU GET TO THINK ABOUT THIS. SEE IF MAYBE YOU CAN COME UP WITH AN ANSWER THAT'LL KEEP YOU FROM GETTING DUSTED.

BUT ONE LAST THING.

FAITH.

WE TRUSTED YOU. AND YOU *LIED* TO US.

YOU *LOOKED INTO MY FACE* AND YOU *LIED.*

FOR *HIM.*

YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE.

NOW LIVE WITH IT.

WE WANT NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH YOU.

DON'T.

JUST DON'T.

GUILDFORD. LATER.

OI.

NAME'S NADIRA. WE'RE EXPECTED.

YOU KNOW WHO WE ARE?

YES.

WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

SO YOU KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF YOU TRY ANYTHING *STUPID.*

RIGHT, THEN. TAKE US TO YOUR BLOODY LEADER.

NICE LITTLE PLACE.

YOUR BOSS MUST DO ALL RIGHT FOR HIMSELF.

HERE.

LOVELY CHATTING WITH YOU.

HELLO. THANK YOU FOR COMING ALL THIS WAY.

BRISK EVENING, ISN'T IT? CAN I OFFER YOU A SPOT OF TEA?

TEA? SERIOUSLY?

WE COME IN HERE CARRYING THE *DEAD BODY OF OUR FRIEND* AND YOU OFFER US *TEA?*

JUST TRYING TO BE CIVIL.

SOD CIVILITY. WE'RE NOT HERE TO CHAT.

WE HEAR YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT ***RESURRECTING THE DEAD.***

WHY, YES...

...YOU MIGHT SAY I HAVE SOME EXPERIENCE IN THAT AREA.

SOHO, LONDON. MANY YEARS AGO.

AAAH!

KEYS

FULLY LICENSED

STEADY ON, DIEDRE, LOVE.

I TOLD YOU THIS MIGHT HURT A BIT.

I DON'T KNOW, ETHAN. I'VE DONE SOME READING ON THIS DEMON. IT'S ***DREADFUL.*** AND EVERY BIT EMPHASIZES HOW ***DEADLY*** HE IS.

YES, OF COURSE. "HERE'S THE KEY TO POWER. NOW DON'T USE IT." THAT'S WHAT ***ALL*** THE BOOKS SAY, DON'T THEY?

WE'RE ***BREAKING DOWN*** THE OLD BARRIERS. MAKING THE OCCULT SERVE US, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

I'VE DONE IT MYSELF. WE ALL HAVE. ACTUALLY BEING ***POSSESSED...*** BY A BEING WHO WAS OLD WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG...

IT'S THE MOST ***INCREDIBLE HIGH.***

BUT WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

NOTHING WILL GO WRONG. I TOLD YOU ABOUT MY MATE, DIDN'T I? HE SPENT YEARS AT THE ***WATCHER ACADEMY.*** ALL THE TRAINING YOU COULD WANT.

YOU SAID HE ***DROPPED*** OUT--

HNNN!

OH!

RANDALL!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM? DID HE GET A BAD DOSE?

I TOLD THAT BERK NOT TO CUT IT WITH *TANNIS ROOT.*

HOLD HIM! THERE'S AN INCANTATION FOR THIS. IF I CAN JUST REMEMBER THE BLOODY WORDS...

LUPUS SOTHAL RECIDO...NO, WAIT. REPRESSUM--

HRRAAAGH!

OH MY GOD!

LUPUS SOTHAL RECESSUM!

DEATH AND CONSEQUENCES

PART 2 OF 4

HOME OF FAITH
LEHANE. NOW.

CLICK

MAYBE IF YOU GIVE THEM SOME TIME...

WHAT PART OF "WE WANT NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH YOU" SOUNDS LIKE "MAYBE" TO YOU, ANGEL?

I--

SHUT UP.

AFTER YOU KILLED GILES--AFTER YOUR BREAKDOWN, WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT--Y'KNOW WHY I TOOK YOU IN?

BECAUSE I *OWED* YOU.

BECAUSE WHEN I HIT BOTTOM, YOU HELPED ME. SO I HELPED *YOU.*

I BACKED YOU ON THIS WHACKED-OUT MISSION TO RESURRECT GILES. I LIED TO THE GIRLS ABOUT YOU. STARTED BLOWING THEM OFF WHEN THEY NEEDED ME, 'CAUSE I WAS BUSY ALMOST GETTING *KILLED.*

I PISSED AWAY *ANY FRIGGIN' PURPOSE I HAD* IN MY MISERABLE EXCUSE FOR A LIFE.

EVERYTHING I GAVE A DAMN ABOUT'S GONE.

BECAUSE OF *YOU.*

SO YOU KNOW WHAT? DEBT PAID.

NOW *YOU* OWE *ME.*

OF COURSE. JUST TELL ME WHAT--

IT'S EASY. YOU'RE GONNA SEE YOUR QUEST THROUGH. COME HELL OR HIGH WATER.

AFTER ALL YOU'VE TAKEN FROM ME, YOU'RE GONNA GIVE ME ONE THING BACK.

HIM.

NO PUSSYING OUT. NO "IT'S TOO DANGEROUS." NO "WE'RE TAMPERING WITH FORCES YADDA YADDA YADDA."

YOU STARTED THIS.

NOW YOU'RE DAMN WELL GONNA *FINISH IT.*

I WILL.

OR I'LL DIE TRYING.

WORKS FOR ME.

WE NEED TO FIND OUT WHO STOLE HIS BODY. PROBABLY BEST TO START WITH THE FUNERAL HOME, SINCE THAT'S THE LAST PLACE ANYONE SAW IT.

GOOD. GREAT.

LET'S GO.

GUILDFORD.

YOU LOOK FAMILIAR.

I LOOK LIKE HALF OF PARLIAMENT.

NADIRA, WASN'T IT? SHALL WE CONTINUE MAKING SMALL TALK, OR SHOULD I SET ABOUT RESURRECTING YOUR FRIEND?

I CAN SEE YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING HER IN A FREEZER. WELL DONE, BUT NOW THAT SHE'S OUT, DECAY CAN SET IN QUICKER THAN YOU KNOW.

WHAT DO YOU NEED US TO DO?

IF THERE'S ANYONE ELSE WHO CARED FOR HER, BRING THEM HERE. THE MORE OF YOU THERE ARE, THE MORE LIKELY WE'LL BE ABLE TO DRAW HER SOUL BACK TO HER BODY.

I'LL CALL THE OTHERS.

SO HOW CAN YOU BRING PEOPLE BACK TO LIFE, WHAT WITH MAGIC BEING GONE AND ALL?

I HAVE CERTAIN OCCULT ARTIFACTS THAT RETAIN THEIR MYSTIC ENERGY.

LIKE WHAT?

MY DEAR. THE PERSISTENCE OF YOUR QUESTIONS MAKES ME WONDER IF YOU'RE NOT HERE FOR YOUR FRIEND AT ALL.

IF PERHAPS YOU'VE COME TO *STEAL* FROM ME.

NADIRA! STOP IT! YOU'LL RUIN EVERYTHING!

FINE. IT'S NOT AS IF I'D UNDERSTAND WHAT THE HELL HE WAS TALKING ABOUT ANYWAY.

DON'T MISUNDERSTAND. I ADMIRE YOU PERFORMING DUE DILIGENCE FOR YOUR FRIEND.

THEN YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING WHAT EXACTLY YOU'RE DOING TO HER.

APPLYING SYMBOLS. ANCIENT SUMERIAN PICTOGRAPHS, DESIGNED TO BIND THE RETURNED SOUL TO THE BODY.

GO ON, TAKE A LOOK.

I TRUST EVERYTHING IS IN ORDER?

YEAH... SURE.

NOTHING WRONG HERE.

SECURITY CAMERAS.

DON'T FIGURE THEY'D HAVE 'EM INSIDE. PRIVACY ISSUES.

BUT IF WE CAN SEE WHO CAME IN AND OUT, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PICK UP SOME LEADS.

BOYD & SON FUNERAL DIRECTORS EST 1902

I'M SORRY, BUT WE ONLY KEEP THE RECORDINGS FOR THREE MONTHS, THEN THEY'RE TAPED OVER.

WAS THERE A PROBLEM WITH YOUR FRIEND'S VIEWING?

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO FIND OUT. THANKS.

I WAS...OUT OF IT AT THE TIME. WALK ME THROUGH THE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS.

LAST ANYONE SAW GILES'S BODY WAS AT THE VIEWING. THERE WERE TWO, SAME DAY.

ONE FOR... PEOPLE LIKE US.

THEN A SECOND ONE, FOR NORMAL FOLKS. FAMILY, FRIENDS... ANYONE WHO'D RAISE AN EYEBROW AT A CYCLOPS SOBBING IN THE BACK ROW. I WAS OUT OF THE LOOP ON THAT ONE.

PEOPLE STILL SIGN GUEST BOOKS AT FUNERALS, RIGHT?

SOPHIE AND LAVINIA WOULD HAVE BEEN THERE, TOO. I SAY WE BRACE 'EM. JOG THEIR MEMORIES. EVEN IF IT TAKES A SMACK UPSIDE THE HEAD.

'CAUSE AFTER THE VIEWING, THE COFFIN WENT STRAIGHT TO THE CEMETERY. SO BETWEEN THE FUNERAL HOME AND THE HEARSE, SOMEONE SNATCHED G.

AND THEY'RE *LONG* OVERDUE FOR SOME PAYBACK.

RIGHT. I NEED YOU ALL TO FOCUS ON YOUR LATE FRIEND. CALL HER BACK TO YOU. REACH OUT WITH ALL THE LOVE IN YOUR HEARTS.

WHY CAN'T WE BE IN THE ROOM WITH HER?

THE RITUAL REQUIRES ME TO BE ***NAKED,*** AND I DON'T FANCY GETTING MY KIT OFF IN FRONT OF GIRLS A THIRD MY AGE, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

IT'S NOT AS IF I'VE TAKEN YOUR MONEY YET. I HAVE NO MOTIVE TO ABSCOND. NOW DO AS I TOLD YOU. IT WILL BE OVER BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

...

BOLLOCKS TO THIS.

NADIRA, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU ***DOING?***

CREEEEAAK

EXPOSED WRINKLY BITS OR NOT, I REFUSE TO LEAVE HER ALONE WITH THAT PERVERTED OLD--

I TOLD YOU IT WOULD BE QUICK.

I THINK A JOYOUS REUNION IS CALLED FOR, DON'T YOU?

WHO'S "OLIVIA WILLIAMS"?

AN OLD FLAME OF RUPERT'S. QUITE DEVASTATED, SHE WAS.

THIS IS A WASTE OF TIME. I ASSURE YOU, WHEN EVERYONE LEFT, RUPERT WAS STILL SNUG IN HIS COFFIN.

OBVIOUSLY HE WAS TAKEN ***AFTER*** THE VIEWING. BEFORE THE COFFIN WAS LOADED INTO THE HEARSE. THAT'S A SHORT WINDOW. LOTS OF PEOPLE AROUND.

I CHECKED OUT THE MORTUARY WORKERS. NO CRIMINAL RECORDS, NO MONEY PROBLEMS, NO TIES TO THE SUPERNATURAL. IT WASN'T THEM.

SO WHOEVER DID IT NEEDED AN EXCUSE TO BE THERE. LIKE BEING A MOURNER. OKAY? CAN YOU LEAVE THE PLANNING TO SOMEONE WHO'S ACTUALLY ***DONE*** DETECTIVE WORK?

CLEARLY ***SOMEONE*** ISN'T AWARE OF MY TENURE AT THE ***DISCO DOLL DETECTIVE AGENCY*** IN THE SEVENTIES...

SHE'S GOT A POINT, THOUGH. IF I WAS GONNA STEAL A BODY, I DON'T THINK I'D SIGN A GUEST BOOK.

OH, I SAW TO IT ***EVERYONE*** SIGNED. LARGELY BECAUSE I COULDN'T RECALL ANY OF THEIR ***NAMES.***

WHAT'S THAT SAY? IT'S A SCRAWL...I CAN'T MAKE IT OUT.

HERE, OLD MAN, LET ME...AH. THAT'S ONE OF RUPERT'S MATES FROM HIS MISSPENT YOUTH...

...ETHAN RAYNE.

YOU'RE *SURE* IT WAS ETHAN RAYNE? YOU'D RECOGNIZE HIM IF YOU SAW HIM?

I SHOULD SAY SO. CHEEKY LITTLE BASTARD SPENT YEARS TRYING TO GET INTO MY KNICKERS. HE WAS OLDER, OF COURSE, BUT IT WAS HIM.

DAMN IT. I DIDN'T EVEN THINK-- AFTER WHAT HAPPENED--

I HEARD ABOUT IT LATER. BUT YOU *RAN* THAT FACILITY. I MEAN, *TWILIGHT* DID. WHAT DID THEY DO WITH--

I DON'T KNOW. AFTER SUNNYDALE, I WAS COMPLETELY OUT OF IT. I ASSUMED THE GOVERNMENT TOOK OVER, SCRUBBED THE PLACE AND EVERYTHING IN IT--

COULD ONE OF YOU *PLEASE* SPEAK IN SOMETHING APPROXIMATING A COHERENT SENTENCE?

WHAT'S GOT YOU SO BLOODY AGITATED?

ETHAN RAYNE'S *DEAD.*

"AND HE DIED *BEFORE GILES.*"

YOU WERE MISINFORMED. IT WAS DEFINITELY HIM.

HE *KNEW* US. WE TALKED OVER OLD TIMES.

HE'D ACTUALLY BECOME QUITE HANDSOME...CUT A DASHING FIGURE IN THAT OLD-FASHIONED HAT. I ALMOST HOPED HE'D MAKE A PASS.

AT A *FUNERAL?* YOU *ARE* A TROLLOP, AREN'T YOU?

LET ME GUESS. THE HAT WAS PULLED LOW.

YES! LIKE HUMPHREY BOGART.

IT WASN'T A FASHION STATEMENT. HE WAS COVERING UP A *BULLET HOLE.*

PROBABLY USED A HAIRPIECE FOR THE EXIT WOUND.

ETHAN RAYNE WAS BEING HELD BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. A GENERAL WORKING FOR...WELL, *ME*...SHOT HIM IN THE HEAD. MURDERED HIM.

THE SECURITY IN THAT PLACE...STANDARD PROCEDURE WAS TO CREMATE ALL REMAINS. I NEVER IMAGINED HE COULD'VE MADE IT OUT.

HANG ON. I KNOW A ZOMBIE WHEN I SEE ONE.

HE *WASN'T* A ZOMBIE. NOT THE WAY YOU THINK.

I WAS ALREADY PRETTY SURE WHO WAS BEHIND THIS. I JUST DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO FIND HIM.

NOW I DO.

OH MY GOD, IT WORKED! *MARIANNE!*

IS...IS ALL THIS FOR *ME?*

OF COURSE IT IS. WE MISSED YOU SO MUCH. EVERYONE'S HERE. EVERYONE WHO LOVES YOU.

EASY, NOW. THE TRANSITION CAN BE JARRING. SOME CONFUSION IS NORMAL. IT SHOULD RESOLVE IN TIME, BUT TREAT HER GENTLY.

MARIANNE...DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? HOW YOU DIED?

I... SOMETHING... VIOLENT.

BACK OFF, NADIRA. GIVE HER TIME. WE'LL GET AFTER THE PSYCHO BITCH WHO DID THIS SOON ENOUGH.

RIGHT. JUST ONE MORE QUESTION. MARIANNE...

...WHAT'S YOUR *LAST NAME?*

HOW ODD. I CAN'T RECALL.

YOU ARE RISKING DOING HER *IRREPARABLE HARM.* I'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT THE CONFUSION.

BUT... HER OWN *NAME?*

MARIANNE. TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF. ANYTHING WE HAVEN'T ALREADY SAID.

ANYTHING AT ALL.

I KNEW IT.

THAT'S *NOT MARIANNE.*

SHE'S *STILL DEAD.*

WELL...

...IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE *PREJUDICED* ABOUT IT.

A LITTLE HELP HERE, PLEASE!

KRIKK

BASTARD! YOU *LIED* TO US!

YOU WANTED HER RESTORED TO LIFE. YOU DIDN'T SPECIFY *HERS.*

I'D HOPED TO DO THIS THE *CIVILIZED* WAY. TAKEN YOU WHILE YOU SLEEP, THROUGH YOUR FRIEND.

SAVES WEAR AND TEAR ON THE HOSTS, CERTAINLY. BUT I MUST ADMIT...

KRANG

...THE *MESSY* WAY IS MUCH MORE *FUN.*

ETHAN RAYNE DIED IN TOP-SECRET CUSTODY. HE WAS NEVER DECLARED DEAD. THERE'S NOTHING STOPPING HIM FROM BUYING REAL ESTATE.

WHICH HE DID. IN GUILDFORD. NOT LONG AFTER GILES'S FUNERAL. I CAN'T BELIEVE I DIDN'T THINK OF THIS.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU COMPREHEND THE *INTERNET.*

NO MORE RECENT RECORDS.

RAYNE WAS TOO RISKY TO KEEP USING, WITH THE PHYSICAL DAMAGE.

YOU HAVE TO FIGURE THE BIG GUY GOT HIMSELF MORE PASSABLE HOSTS.

"BIG GUY"?

SO WHEN YOU SAID YOU KNEW WHERE THE REST OF GILES'S SOUL WAS...

HANG ON--

I KNEW WHO HAD IT. I JUST DIDN'T KNOW WHERE *HE* WAS.

YOU BEAT HIM BEFORE, RIGHT?

HE WON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE.

HE USES THE PEOPLE YOU CARE ABOUT AGAINST YOU. THAT'S HIS STRENGTH.

WHO THE BLOODY HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

EYGHON!!

YEARS AGO.

EXORCIZAMUS TE, OMNIS IMMUNDE SPIRITUS!

IT'S NOT WORKING!

PERHAPS BECAUSE EYGHON ISN'T A BLOODY *CATHOLIC!* HE'S *ETRUSCAN,* REMEMBER?

NO. WE DISCOVERED HIM IN OLD ETRUSCAN WRITINGS, BUT HE IS FAR OLDER. AND I'VE *TRIED* EVERY OTHER RITE OF EXORCISM I'M AWARE OF.

I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...

I KNOW.

YOU ALL WANTED ME INSIDE YOU. AND THAT IS WHAT YOU WILL *HAVE.*

WHAT YOUR ENTIRE WORLD WILL HAVE!

HE'S BREAKING FREE!

RIPPER, THE PELLERIS SPELL!

THAT'S MEANT FOR OBJECTS, LOCATIONS...IT COULD *KILL* RANDALL!

IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, WE'RE ALL DEAD!

I'LL SPEAK THE WORDS OF BANISHMENT. YOU DO THE CLEANSING RITUAL.

FOOLS! YOU CAN NEVER BE FREE OF ME! YOU'VE PUT MY *MARK* UPON YOU!

YOU *BELONG* TO ME!

BODY AND SOUL--

SPLUTCH

WELL DONE, MATE. I THOUGHT WE WERE BUGGERED FOR A MOMENT THERE.

WE ARE, ETHAN.

SOONER OR LATER...WE'LL PAY FOR WHAT WE'VE DONE.

NOW.

THE *HEADS!* CUT OFF *THE HEADS!*

YES, THAT WILL PROVE *QUITE* AN INCONVENIENCE. FORTUNATELY...

...WE HAVE VERY EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT METHODS.

KNK

NNH!

VANESSA, ARE YOU OKAY?

VANESSA?

RRRGGHH!

CAREFUL! IF YOU'RE KNOCKED OUT, THEY TAKE YOU OVER!

WE STUDIED ZOMBIES. THESE *AREN'T* ORDINARY ZOMBIES.

NO, WE ARE NOT.

AND YOU'RE NOT THE LEADER.

WELL...I *AM* ONE OF THE *SPECIAL* ONES, BUT NO.

THEN I'M NOT WASTING ANY MORE TIME WITH YOU.

YOU'RE JUST A PAWN.

I WANT WHOEVER'S IN CHARGE.

WHY, MY DEAR...

...YOU ONLY HAD TO ASK.

I AM EYGHON.

AND VERY SOON... YOU WILL BE TOO.

DEATH AND CONSEQUENCES

PART 3 OF 4

YOU WERE *CRAP* OUT THERE, RIPPER.

I AM CUT TO THE QUICK. TURN AWAY, I CAN'T BEAR FOR YOU TO SEE ME WEEP.

COME ON, MATE, SOD THE PUNK ETHOS. YOU'RE *GOOD.* ONE HELL OF A LOT BETTER THAN YOU'VE BEEN LATELY. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE AN *EFFORT.*

WHY?

OI, RIPPER, THERE'S A DAFFY BIRD OUTSIDE ASKIN' FOR YOU.

NAH, SHE'S ALL POSH, LIKE. AND *OLD.* SHE SAYS SHE'S *FAMILY.*

HH. WHY NOT. CAN'T IMAGINE SHE'S GOT A THICKER MUSTACHE THAN THE LAST ONE.

GRAN...?

"GRAN!" RIPPER'S GOT A--

OUT.

NOW.

RIGHT.

IT WAS QUITE AN EFFORT FINDING YOU.
I'VE BEEN BUSY.
YES, I CAN SEE THAT.
RUPERT...I DON'T PRETEND TO KNOW ALL OF WHAT YOU'VE BEEN GETTING UP TO SINCE YOU LEFT OXFORD. BUT I HAVE HEARD THINGS. *DISTURBING* THINGS.
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO YOURSELF?
AH, GRAN...I'VE BEEN SUCH AN IDIOT.
YOU ALWAYS WARNED ME THAT MAGIC WAS NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH.
THE THINGS I'VE SEEN...THE THINGS I'VE *DONE*...
NO ONE WHO WALKS IN OUR WORLD DOES SO UNSCATHED. WE ALL HAVE OUR DEMONS, RUPERT. OFTEN QUITE LITERALLY.
SUCKER P
ONE DOES NOT GIVE UP. ONE FIGHTS. ONE *PERSEVERES* AND *OVERCOMES* THEM.
WE CANNOT ESCAPE THE DARK, RUPERT. BUT WE CAN REFUSE TO LET IT *OWN* US.
I UNDERSTAND.
BUT WHAT IF, IN THAT REGARD...
...I'VE *ALREADY* FAILED?

NOW.

YOU ALL BELONG TO EYGHON!

DOWN, DAMN YOU! NADIRA, THEY *WON'T GO DOWN!*

THEY'RE ZOMBIES.

AIM FOR THE *HEAD.*

VANESSA'S NOT A ZOMBIE! SHE JUST GOT KNOCKED OUT!

I *KNOW.* THEY'RE TRYING TO KNOCK US *ALL* UNCONSCIOUS. THAT SEEMS TO LET THE DEMON *POSSESS* US.

OH, YOU'LL *LIKE* BEING EYGHON. NO MORE PAIN. NO MORE CONFUSION.

NOTHING BUT EYGHON!

DAPHNE, DEFEND YOURSELF!

I--I DON'T WANT TO *HURT* HER--

NO!

YES.

KNK

OH YES.

HELL!

THIS HAS ALL GONE PEAR SHAPED. WE HAVE TO GET OUT. GET *AWAY.*

THERE'S TOO MANY! WE'RE BOXED IN!

SUBMIT. YOU WILL BE AMONG THE CHOSEN.

YOU WILL HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF SEEING THE GLORIOUS WORLD TO COME--

SHLUK

HEY. CHATTY CATHY.

HARDCORE FANS DON'T LIKE ZOMBIES WHO *RUN.*

YOU KEEP *TALKING,* YOU'RE GONNA BREAK THE INTERNET.

AND ME, FAITH?

WH--?

DON'T YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME?

OH MY GOD...

...GILES?

FAITH, NO!

IT'S NOT HIM!

GHH!

BUT IT *IS*.

UNDER *NEW MANAGEMENT.*

FAITH! LISTEN TO MY VOICE!

WHATEVER YOU DO--

--DON'T BLACK OUT!

HRRAA!

SLLKTT

OW!
YOU--
CUT YOU. SHALLOW. SO YOU'D STAY *AWAKE.*
FIGHTING *EACH OTHER'S* NOT AN OPTION RIGHT NOW.
FAITH, GET THEM *OUT* OF HERE! WE NEED TO REGROUP!
I'LL COVER THE RETREAT.

AH, THE VAMPIRE WITH A SOUL.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS.

WHNH!

BRNCH

I CAN HOLD A GRUDGE A LONG TIME. ASK YOUR LATE FRIEND.

IT'S TRUE.

AAGH!

SHHNK

OH MY GOD...

DON'T LOOK. HE'LL BE OKAY.

YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT *HIM.* I'M CONCERNED ABOUT LEAVING OUR *FRIENDS.*

JESUS, NADIRA, GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF YOUR ASS FOR ONCE.

WE WERE TRACKING ETHAN RAYNE. EQUIPPED TO FIGHT *ZOMBIES. YOU* GOT THE GIRLS INTO THIS. WE CAN'T STOP THEM WITHOUT *KILLING* THEM.

WE'VE GOTTA RUN. COME BACK IN BETTER SHAPE TO SAVE THEM. OR WE *ALL* DIE. MOVE...

"...UNLESS YOU WANNA GET IN THE MIDDLE OF *THAT.*"

SLLKKT

RRAAGGH!

THAT'S TWICE YOU'VE HURT ME.

DEATH IS TOO GOOD FOR YOU.

KRSSHH

I'LL DISMEMBER YOU.

MAKE YOU WATCH YOUR FRIENDS DIE IN AGONY WHILE YOUR LIMBS GROW BACK AND ARE CUT OFF AGAIN!

BUT FIRST YOU'LL SEE THEM TORTURED! DEGRADED!

AND I'LL GRANT THEM JUST ENOUGH AWARENESS TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING!

TO KNOW THEY HAVE YOU TO BLAME!

HURRY!

THOOOM

IDIOTS. I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU. WHERE YOU'LL RUN... WHERE YOU'LL HIDE.

WHO YOU CARE FOR.

ANYTHING YOU LOVE THAT IS NOT ALREADY MINE...

...SOON WILL BE.

WE NEED BETTER WEAPONS. MACHINE GUNS... EXPLOSIVES.

HE'S GOT OUR FRIENDS AS *HUMAN SHIELDS.* ANYTHING POWERFUL ENOUGH TO HURT HIM IS GONNA TAKE THEM OUT TOO.

AND THERE'S NO GUARANTEE IT'LL WORK. WE NEED TO FIGHT *SMART.* ANYONE GOT A CELL PHONE?

H-HERE. THE WI-FI'S A BIT SPOTTY...

I JUST NEED IT TO BE A *PHONE.*

THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE WHO CAN HELP. NADIRA, HEAD FOR LONDON. WE NEED MAGIC ITEMS, AND OURS WERE ALL STOLEN. WHICH MEANS...

"...WE NEED *ALASDAIR.*"

LONDON. HOME OF ALASDAIR COAMES.

IS THERE ANY WAY TO BREAK EYGHON'S HOLD ON PEOPLE?
ONLY BY KILLING HIM.
BONUS. WE WERE GONNA DO THAT ANYWAY.
THIS IS *NOT* GOOD NEWS, FAITH. THE ONLY METHOD OF PERMANENTLY KILLING EYGHON IS TO DECAPITATE HIS TRUE BODY. OTHERWISE, HE CAN REINCARNATE IN ANOTHER VICTIM.
ALL THE WHILE YOU FIGHT HIM, ANY OF YOU KILLED OR KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS INSTANTLY BECOMES ONE OF THE ENEMY.
YOU SAYING WE SHOULD JUST *ABANDON* OUR FRIENDS?
NOT AT ALL. SIMPLY THAT YOU MUST FIGHT *INTELLIGENTLY.* WITH *MAGICAL* WEAPONS, LIKE THESE.
BUT YOU SMOKED THIS GUY ONCE ALREADY, RIGHT, ANGEL?
I THOUGHT I HAD. BUT I SHOULD'VE KNOWN IT WOULDN'T BE THAT EASY.
"I FOUND THIS OUT WHEN I WAS *TWILIGHT,* GATHERING INTEL ON SUPERNATURAL POWER PLAYERS. ONE OF THEM TURNED OUT TO BE EYGHON.
"I THOUGHT HE'D BEEN DESTROYED-- OR AT LEAST BANISHED-- WHEN HE TRIED TO JUMP INTO *ME,* AND THE DEMON ALREADY IN THERE THREW HIM OUT.
"THERE WEREN'T ANY DEAD OR UNCONSCIOUS BODIES AROUND FOR HIM TO ESCAPE INTO.
"NO *HUMAN* ONES.
"HE JUMPED INTO A *DEAD RAT.*

"FROM THERE HE TOOK OVER A PASSED-OUT HOMELESS MAN.

"WHEN EYGHON ENTERS A CORPSE, IT CAN'T HANDLE HIS ENERGIES FOR LONG. SOONER OR LATER, IT JUST DISSOLVES.

"WITH AN *UNCONSCIOUS* PERSON, IT'S *DIFFERENT.*"

YES. THE ANCIENT WRITINGS SAY THAT IF THE VICTIM CANNOT BE EXORCISED, EVENTUALLY EYGHON WILL BE "BORN FROM WITHIN THE HOST."

HIS *TRUE FORM,* BIRTHED INTO *OUR WORLD.*

IT'S EASY TO IMAGINE WHAT FOLLOWED. EYGHON IS NO FOOL. HE'D BEEN UNDONE BY HIS LIMITATIONS. SO HE LAID LOW...

"...UNTIL HE'D *SHED* THOSE LIMITATIONS.

"NOW FULLY ON OUR PLANE, HE WAS READY TO REVENGE HIMSELF UPON HIS OLD DISCIPLES... RUPERT GILES AND *ETHAN RAYNE.*

"BUT HE WAS *TOO LATE.*

"ETHAN WAS KILLED...

"...THEN RUPERT.

"EYGHON WAS DENIED THE PLEASURE OF MURDERING THEM. BUT HE STILL GOT WHAT HE HAD COMING."

THEY WORE HIS MARK. ALLOWED HIM TO POSSESS THEM, REPEATEDLY.

THEY *SOLD THEIR SOULS* TO EYGHON *DECADES AGO.*

THAT'S WHY I KNEW I COULD BRING GILES BACK TO LIFE.

HIS SOUL NEVER LEFT EARTH. IT WENT TO ITS *RIGHTFUL OWNER.*

I'VE BEEN GATHERING PIECES OF GILES'S ESSENCE. HIS SOUL. BUT THE CORE OF IT IS IN EYGHON. I KNEW I HAD TO KILL HIM TO GET IT.

IN HIS PURE FORM, THAT WILL BE EASIER SAID THAN DONE. STILL, IF ANYTHING CAN ACCOMPLISH THE TASK, IT IS THE WEAPONS IN MY ARMORY.

BUT SUPPOSE HE DOESN'T WANT TO TAKE THE CHANCE? WHAT IF HE CHOOSES TO TAKE THE CAPTIVES HE HAS AND GO INTO HIDING AGAIN?

HE WON'T.

BEFORE NADIRA CUT ME, I WAS *PART* OF HIM. JUST FOR A SECOND...BUT I SAW IT.

I KNOW WHAT HE *WANTS.*

"EYGHON GOT HIS PAYBACK. BUT AFTER THE SEED WAS SMASHED, HE WAS STUCK HERE. CUT OFF FROM HIS KINGDOM.

"SO HE DECIDED TO ***RE-CREATE*** IT. HERE ON ***EARTH.***

"IN HIS BIG-BOY BODY, HE'S A LOT MORE POWERFUL. HE CAN PLAY ***MASTER OF PUPPETS*** WITH A WHOLE MESS OF DEAD OR UNCONSCIOUS FOLKS AT ONCE.

"ANGEL, YOU THOUGHT ETHAN RAYNE'S BODY GOT BURNED UP WITH ALL THE OTHER EVIDENCE IN THAT BUNKER. BUT EYGHON POSSESSED A SLEEPING SOLDIER. GOT INSIDE...

"...AND MARCHED ZOMBIE ETHAN OUT LIKE IT WAS A PRISONER TRANSFER. ETHAN WAS NEVER REPORTED DEAD. HE WAS EYGHON'S FACE IN THE HUMAN WORLD.

"HE BOUGHT A BASE OF OPERATIONS. STARTED PUTTING TOGETHER AN ARMY.

"PROBLEM--EYGHON'S ENERGY'S STILL TOO MUCH FOR A HUMAN BODY.

"SOONER OR LATER THEY ***BURN OUT.***

"THE ONES WITH SOULS--GILES, ETHAN, THE UNCONSCIOUS ONES--THEY LAST LONGER. BUT THEY HAVE AN EXPIRATION DATE TOO.

"THE BEST PRESERVATIVE? ***MAGIC.*** THE MORE OF IT THAT'S IN YOU, THE LONGER YOU KEEP.

"ANOTHER PROBLEM-- NOT MUCH MAGIC GOING AROUND THESE DAYS. SO HE HOOKED UP WITH SOME FOLKS WHO WANT TO *CHANGE* THINGS.

"PEARL, NASH, AND WHISTLER.

"GAVE THEM ALL THE MAGIC ITEMS HE COULD GET HIS HANDS ON."

THEY'RE TRYING TO CREATE A SORT OF...*PLAGUE* FROM THE STORED ENERGY IN THESE ITEMS.

IT'LL BRING MAGIC BACK BY MAKING IT *PART* OF US. WE'LL *EVOLVE.*

EXCEPT THE COUPLE BILLION WHO *DIE.*

AND GUESS WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?

OH, NO.

HE GETS THEM.

"THAT'S THE DEAL. EYGHON GETS A CONTINENT. AND BILLIONS OF MAGIC-SOAKED ZOMBIES TO POPULATE IT WITH.

"SURE, EVEN THEY'LL WEAR OUT SOONER OR LATER. BUT AS LONG AS PEOPLE DIE, HE'LL GET MORE WHERE THEY CAME FROM.

"HE'LL BE THE NEW WORLD ORDER'S FIRST SUPERPOWER. AND CREATE A *HELL ON EARTH.*"

THEN WHY DOES HE WANT *US?* OUR *FRIENDS?*

I GOT THE FEELING HE LURED US THERE *SPECIFICALLY.* IF HE JUST WANTS BODIES FOR HIS ARMY, THERE'S EASIER PREY.

HE DOESN'T WANT EASY PREY. HE WANTS *SLAYERS.*

EYGHON'S NOT STUPID. HE DOESN'T TRUST PEARL AND NASH.

WHISTLER, MAYBE. HE'S ALL ABOUT BALANCE, AND MAKING HALF THE PLANET HELL MIGHT BE PART OF HIS PLAN TO MAKE THE OTHER HALF PARADISE.

BUT HE KNOWS PEARL AND NASH DON'T LIKE SHARING POWER. THEY WON'T TRUST HIM ANYMORE THAN HE TRUSTS THEM. GREED RECOGNIZES GREED. HE'S AFRAID THEY'LL TRY A DOUBLE-CROSS.

HE WANTS AN ARMY OF SUPERHUMAN WARRIORS WHOSE BODIES ARE INFUSED WITH MAGIC. SO THEY'LL *LAST.*

HE'S ALREADY GOT ENOUGH TO DO A LOT OF DAMAGE. BUT HE NEEDS *MORE.*

WE NEED TO TAKE HIM OUT BEFORE THEIR NUMBERS GROW.

YOU DO REALIZE HE'LL BE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO HURT HIS THRALLS. WHILE THEY HAVE NO SUCH RESTRICTIONS.

THAT'S WHY I'M LOOKING FOR WEAPONS WE CAN USE TO DISABLE THEM WITHOUT CAUSING PERMANENT DAMAGE. GOT ANY HANDCUFFS?

THE CABINET TO THE LEFT.

DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING THAT CAN WARD OFF POSSESSION?

BY A DEMON REACHING OUT FROM A DISTANCE--FROM A HELL DIMENSION--YES. BUT NOTHING THAT EYGHON, AT CLOSE PROXIMITY, WON'T BE ABLE TO OVERCOME.

I WAS AFRAID OF THAT.

YOU WILL NEED TO FIGHT ***INTELLIGENTLY.*** EACH WITH SPECIFIC ROLES. LADIES, YOUR FOCUS MUST BE EYGHON'S MINIONS.

THOSE OF YOU WITH EDGED WEAPONS, SLAY THE WALKING DEAD. THOSE WITH BLUNT WEAPONS AND RESTRAINTS, ATTACK YOUR LIVING FRIENDS. REMOVE THEM FROM THE FIGHT.

WE KNOW ANGEL IS IMMUNE TO POSSESSION, THANKS TO THE DEMON ALREADY INSIDE HIM. ***HE*** WILL HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO KILL EYGHON.

EXCEPT EVEN WITH A MAGIC SWORD, I DON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST A DEMON IN ITS PURE FORM. NOT ALONE.

WE'RE HARDLY FOOTBALLERS' WIVES.

NOT WHAT I MEANT. YOU'RE ALL INCREDIBLY CAPABLE...AND THAT'S A PROBLEM IF EYGHON TURNS YOU.

I'M IMMUNE. BUT WE NEED SOMEONE ELSE EYGHON CAN'T POSSESS. THAT'S WHAT THE CALL I MADE WAS ABOUT.

WE NEED PEOPLE WE CAN ***TRUST.*** WHO'D YOU HAVE IN MIND? HARMONY? SHE'D SELL US OUT FASTER'N--

NOT HARMONY. ANOTHER VAMPIRE... WITH A SOUL.

HOLD ON. ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT--

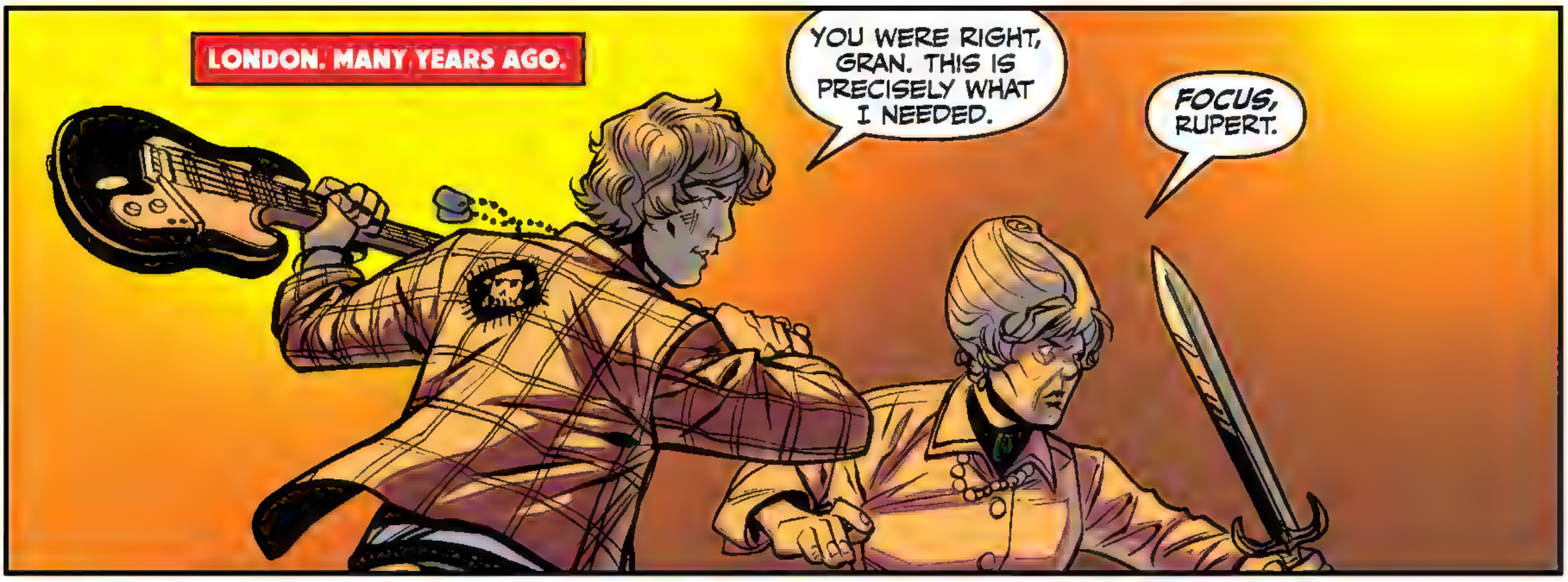
RIGHT.

NO MORE WEEPING AND MOANING, LADIES.

AND YES, ANGEL, I SAW YOU THERE.

SPIKE'S COME TO SAVE THE DAY.

AS BLOODY USUAL.



DEATH AND CONSEQUENCES

PART 4 OF 4

YES, BECAUSE *YOUR* STYLE OF MUSIC IS SO PLEASING TO THE EAR.

YOU KNOW, YOUR BRAND OF SARCASM IS VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL TO YOUR SISTERS'.

YOU *ARE* A WICKED BOY.

WELL, I CAN FAULT THE VAMPIRES' TASTE IN MUSIC, BUT NOT SPIRITS. GRAN?

I COULD DO WITH A DRINK. THIS IS A JOB FOR A *SLAYER,* NOT A PENSIONER AND A WAYWARD BOY.

THE CURRENT SLAYER'S STILL IN AMERICA.

I HEAR THINGS. CHIN-CHIN.

YOU KEEP TABS, DO YOU?

YOU SHOULD *COME BACK,* RUPERT.

WE PUSHED YOU INTO THE *WATCHER ACADEMY* PREMATURELY. I SEE THAT NOW. AND I AM *SORRY.* YOUR FATHER, AS WELL... NOT THAT HE'D EVER SAY SO OUTRIGHT.

BUT YOU HAVE A *TALENT* FOR THIS. YOU COULD DO *SO MUCH GOOD--*

WHY? BECAUSE IT'S MY *DUTY?* THAT'S *FATHER* TALKING.

PERHAPS I HAVE NO WISH TO SPEND MY LIFE IMMERSED IN HORROR, BEFORE DYING PREMATURELY MYSELF.

AND YET YOU'RE RUSHING HEADLONG DOWN THAT PATH ALL ON YOUR OWN.

I'VE OFTEN WONDERED WHAT MIGHT'VE HAPPENED IF I'D BEEN A BIT *OLDER* WHEN I ENTERED WATCHER ACADEMY. BETTER ABLE TO COPE WITH WHAT I SAW THERE.

YES, YES. I KNOW THE STORY BY HEART. I AM *NOT YOU,* GRAN. NOT NEARLY AS STRONG OR CLEVER. PEOPLE HAVE *DIED.* HORRIBLY. BECAUSE OF ME. BECAUSE I WAS STUPID AND SELFISH.

GOOD HEAVENS, RUPERT. I'VE ADMITTED WE PUSHED YOU TOO FAR TOO QUICKLY, BUT I WAS *TEN* WHEN I SAW MY FIRST VAMPIRE. HE AND HIS SIRE TRIED TO *KILL* ME--

YOU WERE A YOUNG FOOL WHO FELT IMMORTAL, DID REMARKABLY ILL-ADVISED THINGS, AND IT COST PEOPLE THEIR LIVES, EH?

YOU BLOODY IDIOT.

THAT DOESN'T *DISQUALIFY* YOU FROM BEING A WATCHER. IT MAKES YOU *PERFECTLY SUITED TO MENTOR A SLAYER.*

THEY'RE *YOUNG GIRLS* GRANTED *TREMENDOUS POWER.* WHO CAN RELATE TO THEM BETTER? A MAN LIKE YOUR FATHER, WHO'S DONE THE RIGHT AND PROPER THING HIS ENTIRE LIFE?

OR *YOU?*

WHAT I'VE DONE GOES WELL BEYOND A MISSPENT YOUTH.

OH, STOP. I KNOW *ALL ABOUT* EYGHON.

PERHAPS YOUR SOUL IS DAMNED. PERHAPS HE'LL CLAIM IT THE MOMENT YOU DIE AND SUBJECT YOU TO AN *ETERNITY* OF TORMENT.

IF YOU WANT TO BE SELFISH ABOUT IT, A LIFETIME OF GOOD WORKS MAY BE THE ONE WAY TO *SAVE* YOURSELF FROM THAT FATE. THE ONLY PATH TO *REDEMPTION.*

AND IF YOU GENUINELY WANT TO *ATONE* FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE, IT'S YOUR *DUTY.* MUCH AS YOU DESPISE THE WORD.

YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE WRONG? THEN STOP CRYING ABOUT IT...

...AND START MAKING *AMENDS.*

HOME OF ALASDAIR COAMES. NOW.

SPIKE.

HELLO, ANGEL. BOLLIXED THINGS UP AGAIN, HAVE YOU?

GOOD ON YOU, THOUGH, KNOWING WHEN TO CALL IN THE BIG GUN. SIGN OF ***MATURATION,*** THAT IS.

YOU CALLED ***SPIKE?*** I MEAN, WE CAN USE THE MUSCLE, BUT I THOUGHT YOU GUYS WERE, LIKE, FRENEMIES. THE ***BETTY AND VERONICA*** OF VAMPIRES.

AHH, HE'S STUBBORN, BUT NOT STUPID. OUR ANGEL KNOWS WHEN HE'S OUT OF HIS DEPTH.

EYGHON CAN'T POSSESS US, BECAUSE THERE'S ALREADY A DEMON IN RESIDENCE. I DON'T LOVE IT, BUT WE NEED THE HELP.

NOT TO MENTION THE SPACESHIP. ITS CANNONS SHOULD DO PRETTY WELL AGAINST DEMONS EYGHON'S SIZE.

SHIP'S GONE. SORE SUBJECT. DON'T WANNA TALK ABOUT IT.

GREAT. THEN HOW'D YOU GET HERE SO QUICK?

I'M JUST RESOURCEFUL. ALREADY WALKIN' THE EARTH. YOU KNOW ME. RESTLESS SPIRIT.

BUFFY GAVE YOU THE BRUSH-OFF, HUH?

I LEFT OF MY *OWN BLOODY ACCORD!* SHE CAN AT LEAST STAND THE SIGHT OF ME, UNLIKE SOME UNDEAD PEOPLE I COULD MENTION!

ANNND CUE THE SLAP FIGHT.

I'M NOT *YOU,* MOONING ABOUT OUTSIDE HER WINDOW. I KNOW WHEN A BIT OF SPACE IS HEALTHY FOR *ALL* CONCERNED.

SHE'S *WITH* SOMEBODY, HUH? HE A GOOD GUY, AT LEAST?

BEEN GETTING CHUMMY WITH A COPPER. SEEMS A DECENT ENOUGH SORT. DUNNO IF IT'S ANYTHING-- WASN'T ABOUT TO HANG AROUND AND FIND OUT. MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO.

MY THINKING EXACTLY.

OH, TOO RIGHT. YOU'RE OUT TO RESURRECT THE *LIBRARIAN* IN THE HOPES SHE WON'T *HATE* YOU ANYMORE.

I'M *TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY MISTAKES.* NOT THAT YOU'D KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT.

WHAT DO *YOU* KNOW ABOUT IT, NEVER BOTHERING TO CHECK IN AFTER YOUR LITTLE COSMIC SHAG? DID YOU HAVE *ANY BLOODY IDEA* SHE THOUGHT SHE WAS--

OI.

WHAT'S THIS, THEN?

WILLIAM THE BLOODY. MASS MURDERER. KILLER OF TWO SLAYERS.

I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU.

THE ONLY WAY TO KILL EYGHON IS DECAPITATE HIM.

ALASDAIR CALLED THIS A ***VORPAL BLADE.*** DON'T PICK YOUR FANGS WITH IT.

WAIT A MINUTE! ***HE*** GETS A PASS?

HE DIDN'T KILL A SQUAD OF MY FRIENDS. AND THE FACT YOU'RE STILL ALIVE MEANS ***YOU*** GOT A PASS, TOO.

BABY SLAYERS. I MISSED BABY SLAYERS. THE ANGST, THE ATTITUDE...BIT LIKE A SOAP OPERA WITH WEAPONS.

ALL RIGHT, FAITH? HOW'RE YOU, THEN? CAPTAIN FOREHEAD MADE A SHAMBLES OF YOUR LIFE YET?

I'M AT ***WAR,*** THAT'S HOW I AM. SO CAN WE TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS?

'CAUSE IF WE'RE GONNA KEEP REMINISCING ABOUT AWKWARD SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS, WE'LL BE HERE ALL DAY.

AH, NO. NO, LET'S NOT DO THAT.

GOOD. SITUATION IN A NUTSHELL-- EYGHON'S GOT A MESS OF POSSESSED SLAYERS, GILES'S REANIMATED BODY, AND A BUNCH OF OLD-SCHOOL ZOMBIES. NOT AS STRONG AS ZOMPIRES, BUT HARD TO KILL.

PLUS HE'S IN HIS ***PURE DEMON FORM.*** WE NEED TO ARM UP FAST. 'CAUSE IF I SAW INTO HIS HEAD WHEN HE TRIED TO POSSESS ME, HE COULD'VE SEEN INTO MINE.

MEANING HE MIGHT KNOW EXACTLY WHERE TO--

SMASH

--FIND US--

I OFFER YOU A FINAL CHANCE. SUBMIT AND LIVE.

BECOME ONE WITH EYGHON.

STICK TO THE PLAN! REMEMBER YOUR ROLE!

THAT WOULD BE TO *DIE*.

WELL, LOOK AT ZOMBIE GILES. UNDEAD AND *STILL* A CRAP FIGHTER.

SHNNGG

GO PLAY WITH THE GIRLS. I'VE GOT IMPORTANT BUSINESS.

ME AND ANGEL DON'T AGREE ON MUCH. BUT ONE THING'S NEVER CHANGED.

PUT US TOGETHER...

...AND THERE WILL BE BLOOD.

INFANTRY SQUARE! WATCH EACH OTHER'S BACKS!

YOU'RE LOST. WE'LL *DIE* FOR EYGHON.

YOU WON'T EVEN KILL US TO SAVE *YOURSELVES.*

DON'T HAVE TO.

CUFF 'EM FASTER! BOOM BOOM!

AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO'S DATED A COP? *MOVE IT!*

AH, YES, THE JOKES. BUT NOT HIDING THE SELF-HATE, ONLY *REINFORCING* IT.

YOU'RE SUCH A DISAPPOINTMENT TO ME, FAITH.

LIKE I GIVE A RAT'S ASS. YOU'RE EYGHON, NOT GILES.

TRUE. BUT I HAVE THE CORE OF GILES WITHIN ME. HIS ESSENCE...THE ***BEST*** OF HIM. I KNOW ALL HE KNEW.

THEN YOU'RE JUST ***LYING.***

YES, PLEASE, GO AHEAD. YOU KNOW THE ONLY WAY TO STOP ME IS TO ***DECAPITATE*** ME.

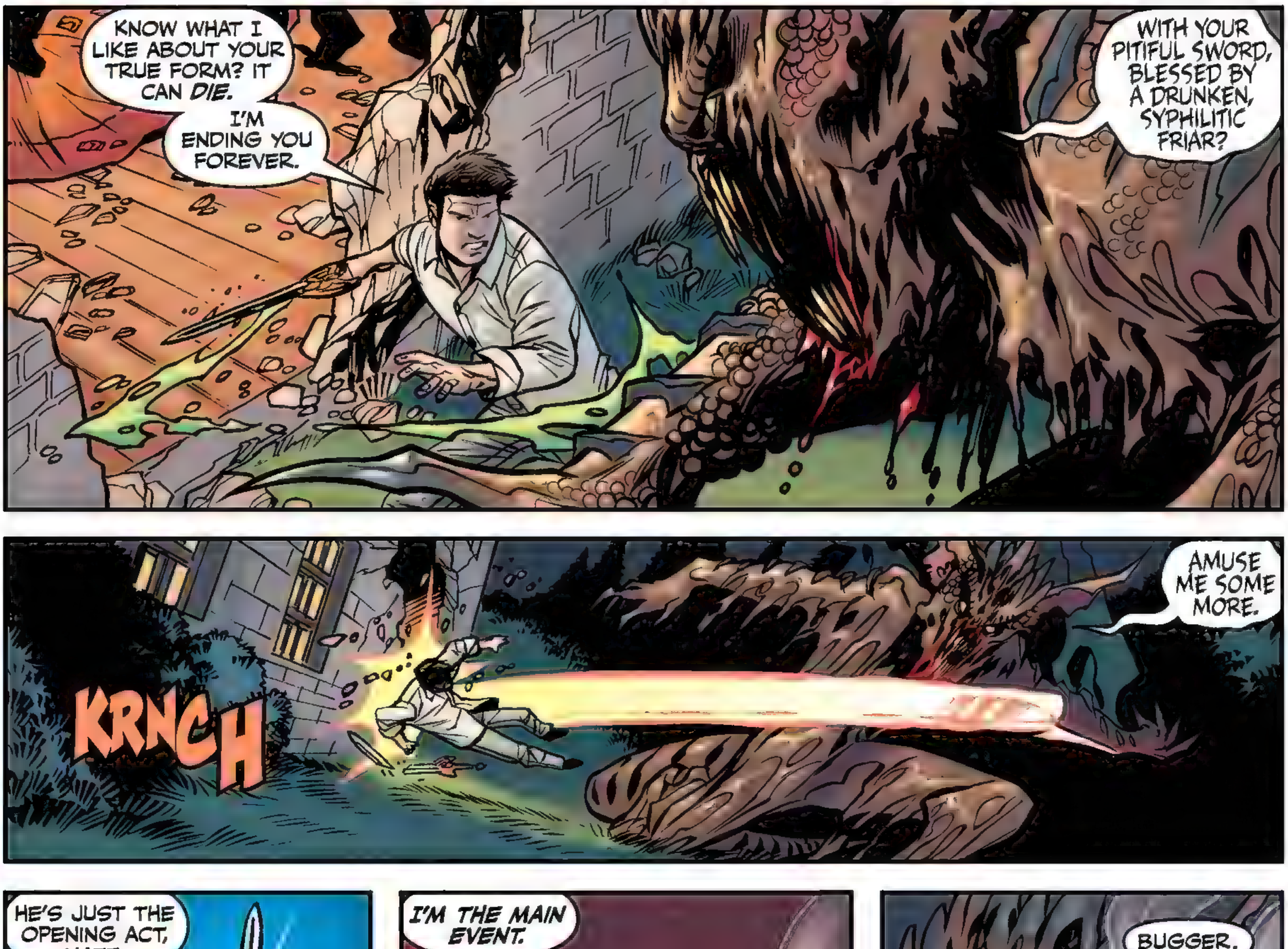
IT WILL BE WORTH IT TO SEE THE AGONY IT CAUSES YOU.

WRONG AGAIN.

THERE'S ***ANOTHER*** WAY.

KILL ***HIM.***

I GOT MY BEST GUYS ON THAT.


KNOW WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOUR TRUE FORM? IT CAN *DIE.*
I'M ENDING YOU FOREVER.
WITH YOUR PITIFUL SWORD, BLESSED BY A DRUNKEN, SYPHILITIC FRIAR?
KRNCH
AMUSE ME SOME MORE.
HE'S JUST THE OPENING ACT, MATE.
I'M THE MAIN EVENT.
WHHSK
BUGGER.

YOU'RE STRONG. I CAN USE YOUR BODY.

THAT'S WHAT THEY ALL SAY. PITY FOR YOU THERE'S ALREADY A DEMON PAYIN' RENT.

AND IF I WERE A DIMENSION AWAY, THAT WOULD STOP ME, AS BEFORE.

BUT I AM HERE. IN MY TRUE FORM. AT THE PEAK OF MY POWER.

NRAAGH!!

YOUR DEMON IS OUTMATCHED.

THE ONLY CHOICES FOR THOSE WHO DEFY EYGHON ARE ASSIMILATION...

...DEATH...

...OR BOTH!

AH, SON OF A--

AT LAST.

YEARS LATER, I STILL FEEL THE PAIN OF BEING CAST OUT OF YOUR BODY. THE HUMILIATION.

SHALL WE TRY IT AGAIN?

WH-WHAT--

THINGS ARE DIFFERENT FOR YOU THIS TIME, HUH? ME TOO.

LAST TIME THERE WERE TWO OF US IN HERE.

NOW THERE'S *THREE.*

THE TOOTH OF AMMUT! I BEGIN TO SEE.

BUT THERE IS A FLAW IN YOUR PLAN. ONE OF THE SOULS WITHIN YOU IS ONLY **PARTIALLY** PRESENT...

...AND BELONGS **ENTIRELY** TO ME.

GGAAAHHH!

YES. BY MY *OWN* DOING.

THESE OTHERS ARE INNOCENT. I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO HARM THEM FURTHER.

HA! THE PAWN FINDS HIS VOICE!

YOU SEE INNOCENTS HERE, "RIPPER"? I SEE SOULS MORE DAMNED THAN YOURS! AND YOU "ALLOW" ME **NOTHING**. YOU DO **AS I SAY**. AND I SAY **SUBMIT**.

STOP! THIS IS INTOLERABLE!

YOU ARE **MINE**! YOU HAVE **NO WILL OF YOUR OWN**!

WHAT THE DENIZENS OF HELL REFUSE TO ACCEPT IS THAT DAMNATION IS, AT SOME POINT, A *CHOICE.*

AS IS *THIS.*

GGHHEEEEEEEEE

SQUTT

I LIKE THAT SOUND.

DNH!

CLOSE ENOUGH.

ANGEL!

CATCH!

ALL MUST BE EYGHON!

WHHSSSTHK

HFF!

OH... HELLO.

DID I SAVE THE DAY? HAVE WE WON?

YEAH.

YEAH, WE WON.

NNH...

...AHHT!

WELL, MY WORK HERE IS DONE. AND LIKE ALL THE BEST SCRAPS, I CAN'T REMEMBER A BLOODY THING.

WHY DO MY BOLLOCKS ACHE?

UM, BEATS ME. IS ANGEL OKAY?

VACANT STARE, DROOLING LIKE THE VILLAGE IDIOT...YEP, ALL'S RIGHT WITH OLD ANGEL.

HANG ON, IS THAT A NIPPLE PIERCING? WILL WE BE CUTTING OURSELVES AND FOLLOWING THE CURE ABOUT AS WELL?

IT'S *MAGIC*, SMARTASS. SOME KINDA SOUL MAGNET...SUCKS UP THE PIECES OF GILES'S SOUL AND STORES 'EM LIKE A HARD DRIVE.

OH, THE *TOOTH OF AMMUT?* THAT'S HARDLY A STORAGE DEVICE. MORE OF A *CONDUIT.* IT'D CHANNEL THE OLD CHAP'S SOUL INTO--

ANGEL.

I'LL DO IT, GRAN.

IF YOU TEACH ME, I'LL FINISH MY TRAINING.

I WILL BECOME A *WATCHER.*

THAT'S ACTUALLY A PASSABLE BRITISH ACCENT. BIT ON THE POSH SIDE, BUT CONSIDERING WHERE YOU LIVE--

THAT WASN'T ANGEL TALKING.

THAT WAS *GILES*...

AH, OF COURSE. HE'S GOT A *TRIO* IN THERE NOW, DOESN'T HE? HIMSELF, ANGELUS, AND OLD RUPERT'S COMPLETE SOUL. MUST BE A RIGHT RACKET.

ANGEL WAS NEVER MUCH OF A TALKER, BUT THOSE OTHER TWO, BLOODY HELL, THEY NEVER STOPPED. LOVED TO HEAR THE SOUND OF THEIR OWN VOICES, THEY DID--

ANGEL, ARE YOU OKAY?

HE'S *DESTROYED YOUR LIFE* AND YOU'RE STILL WORRIED ABOUT HIM?

IS THAT ALL IT TAKES? A MAN WANTS YOU FOR SOMETHING BESIDES A QUICK *RUT* AND YOU'RE SO PATHETICALLY GRATEFUL YOU BEND OVER BACKWARDS, IGNORING THE SOUND OF YOUR OWN *SPINE BREAKING*--

WHRAK

STOP IT, WESLEY. I'M FINE.

TELL CORDELIA NO MORE CALLS TODAY. I JUST NEED TO LIE DOWN. CLEAR MY HEAD...

BUG-EATING MAD. REALLY, WHAT'S SHOCKING IS THAT IT TOOK *THIS* LONG.

IT'S ONLY BECAUSE OF GILES. WE CAN FIX IT.

IT'S NOT GILES I'M CONCERNED ABOUT. THAT WAS *ANGELUS,* FOR A MOMENT THERE. AND THAT BLOKE ONLY *NEEDS* A MOMENT TO KILL US ALL.

GOT A PROBLEM, DO WE?

PROBLEM SOLVED.

HEY!

HE *SAVED YOUR LIFE.*

ALL OUR LIVES.

THAT'S WHO HE REALLY IS.

NOT ANGELUS. NOT TWILIGHT. NOT...*THIS.*

IF YOU WOULDN'T KILL *THEM* WHEN THEY WERE POSSESSED BY EYGHON...

...YOU'VE GOT NO RIGHT KILLING *HIM.*

AND IF YOU STILL WANT TO TRY... YOU'LL HAVE TO GO THROUGH ME.

I'M DONE APOLOGIZING FOR THAT.

FINE. I SUPPOSE HE'S EARNED A CHANCE.

YOU HAVEN'T. YOU *LIED* TO US. WE PUT OUR *TRUST* IN YOU AND YOU *BETRAYED* US.

AND YOU LOT...YOU LOOK LIKE A PACK OF BEATEN DOGS. I CAN SEE IT ON YOUR FACES. YOU'RE GOING *THROUGH* WITH IT, AREN'T YOU?

WE LOSE A FRIEND AND INSTEAD OF AVENGING HER YOU'RE GOING TO *RUN AND HIDE* LIKE THE WANKERS YOU ARE. AT LEAST *FAITH'S* NEVER *QUIT.*

BUT FINE. YOU ALL CHOSE YOUR SIDES. THE ENEMY, YOURSELVES... WHATEVER. I'LL CARRY ON MYSELF. STILL PLENTY OUT THERE WHO NEED SLAYING.

IN THE OLD DAYS, THERE WAS A CHOSEN *ONE.*

SUITS ME IF IT'S THAT WAY AGAIN.

SOMEONE'S A DRAMA QUEEN...

DAPHNE...WHAT WAS SHE TALKING ABOUT? I KNOW I DISAPPOINTED YOU, BUT YOU HAVE TO KNOW I NEVER WOULD'VE DONE ANYTHING TO HURT YOU GUYS.

YOU'RE MY *FRIENDS.* THE BEST THING IN MY--

FAITH...NADIRA'S GOT ISSUES, YEAH? WE ALL KNOW THAT.

BUT SHE'S NOT *WRONG.*

WE WERE TALKING, MOST OF US, AFTER DRUSILLA KILLED MARIANNE. BEFORE ALL THIS EYGHON BUSINESS EVEN HAPPENED.

THE RULES *HAVE* CHANGED. BEING A SLAYER *DOESN'T* MAKE YOU THE "CHOSEN ONE" ANYMORE. NOW *WE* HAVE A CHOICE.

AND WE DON'T WANT THIS.

WE'RE *DONE*, FAITH. WE'RE GOING OUR SEPARATE WAYS.

YOU HELPED US TREMENDOUSLY, WHEN WE NEEDED IT. WE'LL NEVER FORGET THAT.

WE GOT THIS POWER, AND DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO USE IT. SUDDENLY ALL THESE PEOPLE... AND *NOT* PEOPLE...WANTED TO *KILL* US. OUR WHOLE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN.

YOU TAUGHT US TO BE *STRONG.* HOW HELPING PEOPLE WEAKER THAN US HELPS US AS WELL AS THEM. YOU SHOWED US HOW TO TAKE *CONTROL* OF OUR LIVES.

THAT'S WHAT WE'VE DECIDED TO DO. GO AFTER WHAT WE WANT. BUT WE DON'T WANT THE SAME THINGS.

WELL, THAT'S NOT TRUE. WE AGREE ON *ONE* THING. WE DON'T WANT *OUR* LIVES...

...TO BE LIKE YOURS.

I-I GET IT. REALLY. AND I'M HAPPY FOR YOU. I JUST... I WANNA MAKE SURE...

IF I HADN'T LIED TO YOU, WOULD YOU STILL--

MAYBE NOT SO SOON. BUT YEAH, WE WOULD'VE GOT TO THIS POINT EVENTUALLY. BETTER TO REALIZE IT NOW THAN KEEP ARSING ABOUT BECAUSE WE'RE HAVING FUN, ISN'T IT?

WE'LL KEEP IN TOUCH, YEAH?

RIGHT. NOW THAT EVERYONE'S HAD THEIR GRAND EXIT...

YOU, OLD FELLA. YOU'RE THE POOR MAN'S GILES, AREN'T YOU? MAKE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE. HOW DO WE GET ANGEL BACK TO HIS OLD PERSONALITY? SUCH AS IT IS.

I FIGURE IF THE TOOTH PUT A SOUL IN HIM, IT CAN TAKE IT OUT.

IN THEORY, YES. BUT THERE'S NO WAY I'M AWARE OF TO SPECIFY *WHICH* SOUL.

IF SOMETHING WENT WRONG...WE COULD UNLEASH *ANGELUS.*

OH, PLEASE. WE'VE GOT GILES'S BODY, DON'T WE? ONE WOULD THINK HIS SOUL *WANTS* TO GO HOME.

EVEN IF THAT WERE TRUE, WHICH I HAVE NO EVIDENCE OF, THERE IS MORE TO RESURRECTION THAN PLACING A SOUL BACK INTO A DEAD BODY.

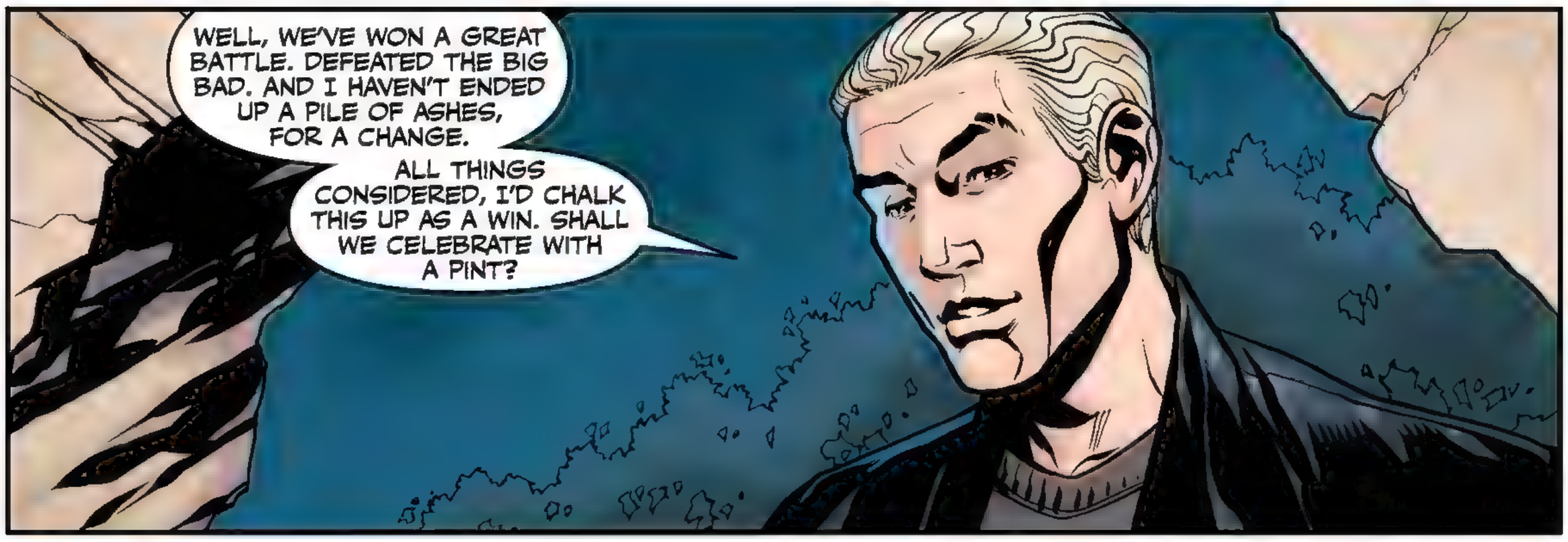
IF YOU WISH TO END UP WITH SOMETHING OTHER THAN A ZOMBIE OR A REVENANT, GREAT MAGIC IS REQUIRED. OR *WAS,* WHEN SPELLS STILL FUNCTIONED.

WELL, PRESUMABLY SOMEONE HAD SOME RUDDY IDEA HOW TO RESURRECT THE MAN BEFORE YOU ALL STARTED THIS!

SURE.

HIM.

ANGEL FAITH & SPIKE™



SPIKE AND FAITH

I WARNED YOU. *THREE* BEINGS IN ONE BODY...THIS WAS *PRECISELY* THE SORT OF DANGER INHERENT IN TRYING TO RESURRECT RUPERT.

WHAT--GILES, ANGEL, AND ANGELUS? NOT SURE YOU CAN CALL ANGELUS A "BEING," REALLY. MORE OF A DEMON. WHO'S *ALWAYS* THERE, SO--

THE SEMANTICS WON'T MATTER IF THE ANGELUS PERSONA BECOMES DOMINANT. WE'LL ALL BE TOO BUSY DYING.

YOU WERE MEANT TO *KEEP THIS FROM HAPPENING,* FAITH--

HEY. ALASDAIR. YOU WANNA SPEND ALL DAY MONOLOGUING ON WHAT A USELESS PIECE OF CRAP I AM...

...OR ARE YOU GONNA TELL ME HOW TO *FIX* THIS?

AH... YES. YOU'RE *RIGHT,* OF COURSE.

OUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS MUST BE TO SECURE ANGEL WHERE HE CAN DO NO HARM TO OTHERS.

OR HIMSELF. HE'S WALKING A MILE IN GILES'S SHOES. EXPERIENCING THE PAIN ANGELUS INFLICTED ON HIM FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

I'D KEEP HIM AWAY FROM WOOD AND SUNLIGHT.

WE'VE GOT A ROOM OVER AT THE HOUSE. RIGHT AFTER...AFTER GILES DIED, WHEN HE WAS REAL BAD OFF, SOMETIMES HE'D... Y'KNOW. HURT HIMSELF.

THAT WILL DO. LET'S GET HIM THERE.

WHY BOTHER? IT LOOKS TO ME AS IF YOU'RE A *HOARDER,* BUT WITH MAGIC ITEMS INSTEAD OF RAMEN NOODLES AND JARS OF URINE.

THERE MUST BE *SOMETHING* IN THIS MESS THAT CAN PUT THINGS RIGHT.

I'M AFRAID NOT. THE ONLY SOLUTION IS TO ***REMOVE*** RUPERT'S SOUL FROM ANGEL'S BODY. YET ONLY ANGEL KNEW HOW HE PLANNED TO RESURRECT RUPERT.

ABSENT A PHYSICAL BODY FOR THE SOUL TO INHABIT, WE REQUIRE AN ***ARTIFACT*** MADE FOR THAT PURPOSE.

I OWN AN ***ORB OF THESULAH,*** BUT WITHOUT THE ***RITUAL OF RESTORATION*** IT'S USELESS. AND CONSIDERING ***ALL*** SPELLS ARE NOW INEFFECTIVE...

WE NEED A MAGICAL ITEM THAT DOES NOT DEPEND ON A ***SPELL*** TO FUNCTION. WHOSE OWN INNATE ENERGIES ALLOW IT TO WITH-DRAW AND HOUSE A SOUL.

SLIM PICKINGS. ALL I CAN THINK OF IS THE ***ESSUARY,*** BUT NO ONE'S SEEN THAT SINCE THE LEY LINE WAR OF '78.

OH, I KNOW WHERE IT IS. HERE IN LONDON.

OKAY! SO WE GO GET IT!

EASIER SAID THAN DONE. IT'S IN THE POSSESSION OF A COVEN OF ***ENDERS.***

ENDERS?

WHAT ARE ENDERS? AND WHY ARE YOU SCARED OF THEM?

I BLOODY WELL AM ***NOT.*** REALISTIC, MORE LIKE.

ENDERS ARE BEINGS THAT SUBSIST ON SOULS. I DON'T MEAN USE THEM AS CURRENCY OR POWER SOURCES, LIKE MANY DEMONS. I MEAN THEY ***EAT THEM.***

THEY DO NOT SIMPLY KILL YOU. THEY REMOVE YOUR SOUL AND CONSUME IT UTTERLY.

THEY ***END*** YOU.

LOOK, SUPPOSE WE USE WHAT WE HAVE--THE *TOOTH OF AMMUT.* THE SOUL MAGNET. WE DRAW GILES'S SOUL OUT WITHOUT ANYWHERE FOR IT TO GO BUT TO ITS ETERNAL REWARD.

THE OLD FELLA'S ALREADY DEAD, AND LIKE YOU SAID, THERE'S A LOT THAT CAN GO WRONG WITH A RESURRECTION. AT LEAST THIS WAY HE'D BE AT PEACE.

BELIEVE ME, I'D ADVOCATE JUST THAT IF I THOUGHT IT WOULD WORK. BUT ANGEL'S BEEN WORKING SO HARD TO OBTAIN GILES'S SOUL, I BELIEVE HE'D OFFER UP HIS *OWN* FIRST...

...AND THEN WE COULD BE LEFT WITH *ANGELUS.*

I'VE GOT AN IDEA. WHY DON'T WE JUST *STAKE* ANGEL, RIGHT HERE AND NOW?

PROBLEM SOLVED. NO ANGEL, NO GILES. LIFE EASIER FOR EVERYONE.

ALL RIGHT! I WAS JUST PUTTING IT OUT THERE. SAYING WHAT YOU LOT WERE THINKING.

I WASN'T THINKING IT.

I'M GONNA FIND THESE ENDERS. I'M GONNA *KILL* 'EM. I'M GONNA GET THIS MACGUFFIN AND USE IT TO SAVE ANGEL AND GILES.

ANYONE WHO WANTS TO HELP, SPEAK UP. ANYONE WHO DOESN'T, *SCREW YOU.*

OLD MAN. YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT CAN REGENERATE GILES'S BODY, RIGHT?

THE *CROWN OF COILS,* YES. ANGEL AND FAITH BROUGHT IT BACK FROM PERU.

TAKE CARE OF IT. AIN'T RIGHT, LEAVIN' HIM LIKE THAT, REGARDLESS OF WHAT HAPPENS. BUT FIRST WRITE DOWN WHERE WE FIND THE ENDERS.

WE'LL LOCK ANGEL UP, THEN PAY 'EM A VISIT.

WE DON'T COME BACK...WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS DOWN TO YOU.

HOME OF FAITH LEHANE.

WELL, WELL. *SOMEONE'S* BEEN A NAUGHTY GIRL.

OR DID THIS BELONG TO OLD RUPERT? WOULDN'T SURPRISE ME. THOSE TWEEDY SORTS ALWAYS KEEP BONDAGE GEAR UNDER THE BED.

I DON'T THINK WE NEED THE LEG IRONS. AND YOU'RE NOT FUNNY.

DON'T GET HIGH AND MIGHTY WITH ME, PET. RESURRECTION'S A TRICKY BUSINESS. I'VE SEEN IT. KINDER TO LET THE DEAD REST.

YEAH, I KNOW. PLENTY OF PEOPLE HAVE SAID THAT. HELL, *I* WAS SAYING IT FOR A WHILE. BUT YOU'VE SEEN IT *WORK,* TOO. *ONCE,* ANYWAY.

I'M GONNA MAKE IT WORK *AGAIN.* OR DIE TRYING.

YOU USED TO BE MORE FUN, YOU KNOW THAT?

MM. HELL OF A NOTE, INNIT?

TURNS OUT I'VE *MATURED.*

BAD NEWS--THERE'S NO CURE. THE GOOD NEWS IS...

...LIFE OFTEN PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES TO VENT YOUR FRUSTRATIONS.

KENSAL GREEN CEMETERY.

H-HANG ON. JUST WAIT A MINUTE.

THIS IS WHAT YOU **WANTED**, MORTAL. YOU CAME TO US SEEKING THE SOLACE OF OBLIVION.

NOT MERELY TO DIE, BUT TO BE ERASED FROM EXISTENCE.

W-WELL YEAH...THINGS'VE BEEN PRETTY GRIM LATELY. I WANT THE PAIN TO STOP. BUT THIS...IT'S A BIT ***FINAL,*** INNIT?

COULD I, I DUNNO, SLEEP ON IT AND GET BACK TO YOU?

NO.

SSTHTT RREEEEE!

FRAGILE PEOPLE WANTING TO END IT ALL.

FIGURE YOU GUYS'VE BEEN IN HOG HEAVEN.

BUT NOW YOU'VE FATTENED UP, THE BUTCHER'S HERE.

YOU HAVE STOLEN OUR FEAST.

SO YOU BECOME IT.

GRAAGH!

ALL RIGHT, SUNSHINE.

TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT GAME.

SHHRRNNCCH

SPIKE! ARE YOU--?

R-RIGHT AS RAIN.

BLOODY SOULS HURT WORSE COMING OUT THAN GOIN' IN...

AH, CRAP. I DIDN'T THINK--DID HE--

NAH. KILLED 'IM BEFORE HE COULD PULL THE FULL SOUL SNATCH.

WILLIAM THE BLOODY'S COMEBACK TOUR IS GONNA HAVE TO WAIT.

DAMN. I GET IT NOW. LOOK, YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THE RISK. I CAN DO THIS ALONE.

FIGHT A COVEN OF ENDERS IN THE VICTORIAN CATACOMBS? YOU'RE GOOD, LOVE, BUT YOU'RE NOT UP TO THAT.

FRENC

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PLAY THE BADASS WITH ME. I GET NOT WANTING TO GO BACK TO WHO YOU WERE.

I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES. I'M NOT ANGELUS. I WASN'T SUCH A BAD SORT WITHOUT A SOUL.

SOME MIGHT EVEN HAVE PREFERRED ME THAT WAY.

SO, HOW DOES OLD PRINCIPAL WOOD FEEL ABOUT YOU SHACKING UP WITH A VAMPIRE? AS I RECALL, HE'S A BIT PREJUDICED.

YOU KIDDING? ME AND ROBIN ARE ANCIENT HISTORY. NOT LIKE HE'D HAVE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. ALL ANGEL'S DONE FOR MY LOVE LIFE IS KEEP ME TOO BUSY TO HAVE ONE.

YEAH, I'M IN A BIT OF A DRY SPELL MYSELF. CHEERS TO MATURITY, EH?

PERHAPS I'M BEING A BIT BOLD, BUT I SEEM TO RECALL A CERTAIN CHEMISTRY BETWEEN US.

IF WE LIVE THROUGH THIS, MIGHT BE WE COULD CHANGE EACH OTHER'S LUCK.

OKAY, LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT. ***NO WAY*** AM I SLEEPING WITH YOU.

WELL, WHY THE BLOODY HELL NOT? YOU SHAGGED ***XANDER!*** IN THE WAR WITH THE FIRST, YOU PRACTICALLY ***THREW*** YOURSELF AT ME!

DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE BECOME SOME KIND OF BORN-AGAIN ***PRUDE.***

NAH. TO BE HONEST, I COULD USE A ROLL IN THE HAY.

IT'S NOT ME. IT'S ***YOU.***

YOU'RE INTO BAD BOYS! I ***INVENTED*** THE BAD BOY!

MAYBE. BUT LIKE YOU SAID, YOU'VE MATURED.

THESE DAYS, YOU'RE MORE LIKE ***ANGEL.***

WHAT?

BESIDES. I'M NOBODY'S REBOUND GIRL.

I AM *NOTHING* LIKE ANGEL!

SHUKK

SURE YOU ARE. VAMPIRE WITH A SOUL, HUNG UP ON BUFFY, FIGHTING YOUR OWN KIND...

YOU UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER THAN ANYONE ON EARTH. THAT'S WHY YOU'VE GOT THIS WHOLE BACKDOOR ***BROMANCE*** GOING.

"BROMANCE"?

THERE IS NO "BROMANCE"! AND ***DEFINITELY*** NOTHING TO DO WITH BACK DOORS!

SURE. THAT'S WHY YOU KEEP HANGING OUT EVEN THOUGH YOU SAY YOU HATE EACH OTHER.

WE DO NOT ***"HANG OUT"!*** CIRCUMSTANCES ***THRUST*** US TOGETHER!

WAIT. NOT "THRUST." FATE ***DRAWS*** US TOGETHER...

WE MOVE IN SIMILAR CIRCLES, ALL RIGHT?

CHOK

CHOP

OH YEAH? YOU'RE STILL IN LOVE WITH B, THAT'S OBVIOUS, BUT YOU'RE NOWHERE NEAR HER.

PROBABLY WALKED AWAY AFTER SAYING SOME CRAP ABOUT HOW IT'S NOT HEALTHY FOR EITHER OF YOU, BLAH BLAH.

HOW'S THAT ANY DIFFERENT FROM WHEN ANGEL WENT TO L.A.?

IT'S VERY DIFFERENT ON MANY LEVELS!

UNNH!

I HAVE GONE ON WITH MY LIFE!

I HAVE DONE THINGS!

IMPORTANT THINGS!

SAVING *YOUR* UNAPPRECIATIVE ARSE MAY OR MAY NOT QUALIFY. REGARDLESS, THE POINT IS--

--I AM *MOVING* ON.

AND LOOK AT THAT.

YOU SMOKED THESE GUYS WITHOUT FREAKING OUT EVEN A LITTLE.

AW, THAT'S ***BRILLIANT!*** I SEE NOW.

YOU ONLY SAID ALL THAT TO PISS ME OFF, SO I'D BE AN UNSTOPPABLE RAGE MACHINE.

NOPE. MEANT EVERY WORD.

THE *TIMING* WASN'T AN ACCIDENT, THOUGH.

LISTEN, I'M PROBABLY THE LEAST QUALIFIED PERSON IN THE WORLD TO GIVE ANYONE ADVICE ON THEIR LOVE LIFE. BUT I'LL TELL YOU THIS.

YOU WON'T GET OVER BUFFY BY GETTING LAID.

RRNCH

BUT YOU'LL PROBABLY GET LAID WHEN YOU GET OVER BUFFY.

WELL, THAT'S JOLLY GOOD NEWS FOR THE WOMENFOLK OF LONDON, BECAUSE I'M OVER HER *RIGHT NOW*--

NAH.

EVEN I WASN'T BUYING THAT.

HOME OF FAITH LEHANE

SO YOU'RE OLD RUPERT'S *GREAT-AUNTS?* LOVELY TO MEET YOU. I CAN SEE WHY HE KEPT YOU HIDDEN AWAY.

I'VE ALWAYS FANCIED WOMEN IN THEIR HUNDREDS...PROPERLY PRESERVED, OF COURSE. IT'S SO RARE TO FIND SOMEONE WHO APPRECIATES BOTH YEATS AND BUKOWSKI IN CONTEXT.

ARE THOSE TYPES OF CHEESE?

I BELIEVE THEY'RE FOOTBALLERS. MANCHESTER, I THINK.

NO, THEY'RE...IT DOESN'T MATTER.

POINT IS, WHY DON'T WE LEAVE THIS LOT TO THEIR TEDIUM AND HAVE A DRINK, JUST THE THREE OF US?

I FOUND A BOTTLE OF GENUINE *NEUCHÂTEL ABSINTHE* IN THE CELLAR. CAN'T THINK OF ANYONE I'D RATHER ENJOY IT WITH.

NO, I DON'T THINK SO. PITY, REALLY, I'M RATHER IN THE MOOD FOR AN UNCOMPLICATED SHAG.

YES, BUT HE SEEMS THE TYPE TO GET ATTACHED, DOESN'T HE?

SHAME. I BET HE'D BE QUITE A BIT OF FUN IF HE DIDN'T HAVE A SOUL.

A STAKE, I THINK. STAKES ARE QUICK.

THOUGH WALKING INTO SUNLIGHT AND *GOING DOWN IN FLAMES* SEEMS AN APT METAPHOR...

RIGHT. WE WERE ALL CLOSE TO RUPERT. WE MUST GATHER AROUND THE ESSUARY AND CALL HIS SPIRIT TO US. HIS, AND NO OTHER.

SHOULD I BRING ANGEL UPSTAIRS?

GOOD HEAVENS, NO. HE MUST BE RESTRAINED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. WE CAN'T RISK LOOSING ANGELUS EVEN FOR A MOMENT.

HE IS DIRECTLY BENEATH US. THAT SHOULD BE CLOSE ENOUGH.

I'D RATHER HAVE HIM WHERE I CAN SEE HIM.

A VALID POINT. HE SHOULDN'T BE UNSUPERVISED.

SPIKE, GO SIT WITH ANGEL, IF YOU WOULD. SEE THAT HE REMAINS CONFINED.

'COURSE. SEND SPIKE DOWN TO DWELL AMONG THE LUNATICS. PERFECT END TO A PERFECT SODDING DAY.

WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T RELEASE HIM! NO MATTER WHAT HE SAYS--NO MATTER HOW AGONIZING HIS SCREAMS--YOU MUSTN'T TAKE PITY ON HIM!

THAT WILL NOT BE A PROBLEM.

ALL RIGHT, ANGEL?

WHY DO YOU HATE ME SO, FATHER?

OH, *THIS* IS GOING TO BE A RIGHT PARTY.

THIS IS *ENTIRELY YOUR FAULT,* YOU KNOW.

"LOOK AT ME, I HAVE A *SOUL* NOW! I BROOD. I FLAGELLATE MYSELF. I HAVE *OH, SO MANY FEELINGS.*

"I'M *WORTHY OF THE SLAYER."*

AND, OF COURSE, FOR *YOU* IT WORKS LIKE A BLOODY *CHARM.*

SO LIKE A RIGHT WANKER, I PUT MYSELF THROUGH *UNIMAGINABLE AGONY...*BY *CHOICE,* UNLIKE SOME PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM. I WIN MY *SOUL* BACK.

SO I WON'T BE A *MONSTER* ANY-MORE.

NEVER ASKING MYSELF IF PERHAPS A MONSTER WAS WHAT SHE *WANTED.*

SOON AS SHE REALIZES I'M CAPABLE OF HUMAN *EMOTION,* MIGHT WANT SOMETHING *REAL,* I MAY AS WELL BE A LEPER.

AND ALL I END UP WITH IS THE CAPACITY TO FEEL LIKE *HELL* ABOUT THE WHOLE BLOODY MESS.

WE CAN'T HELP FEELING AS THOUGH YOUR LIFE--THE REPRESSION, THE FOCUS ON OTHERS, THE NEGLECT OF YOURSELF--THAT IT WAS PARTIALLY *OUR FAULT.*

PLEASE COME BACK TO US, RUPERT. GIVE YOURSELF ANOTHER CHANCE.

GIVE *US* ANOTHER CHANCE.

THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL.

YOU LOOK HIDEOUS. YOUR EYES ARE ALL PUFFY.

FAITH?

OH...Y'MEAN I CAN'T JUST, I DON'T KNOW, *CONCENTRATE?*

YOU COULD, BUT IT'S FAR MORE EFFECTIVE SPOKEN. SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE AUDITORY VIBRATIONS.

OKAY. UM. LET ME THINK.

I WENT FROM THINKING ANGEL WAS NUTS TO BUSTING MY ASS JUST AS HARD AS HIM TO BRING YOU BACK.

BEEN WONDERING WHETHER I'M DOING IT FOR YOU OR ME.

BUT IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS, ISN'T IT?

I NEED YOU, G. WICKED BAD.

I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU ABOUT MY DADDY ISSUES. BUT I'VE ALWAYS WISHED I TOLD YOU THIS--YOU'RE THE BEST I EVER GOT.

AND BY THE TIME I GOT THAT THROUGH MY STUBBORN-ASS SKULL, IT WAS--IT WAS TOO LATE TO...

JUST COME BACK TO US, OKAY? COME BACK TO *ME.*

PLEASE.

I MEAN, IT'S TYPICAL WOMEN, ISN'T IT? THEY GO ON AND ON ABOUT HOW THEY WANT A GOOD MAN. A *SENSITIVE* MAN WHO *RESPECTS* THEM.

BUT THE MOMENT THEY'VE BEATEN YOU INTO ONE, THEY FIND YOU A DREADFUL *BORE* AND THROW YOU OVER FOR THE FIRST BROODING, TORTURED *PONCE* WHO COMES ALONG.

AND NOW I'M BLOODY STUCK THIS WAY!

AH, WHO AM I KIDDING? LET'S BE HONEST, SHALL WE? I'VE NEVER BEEN MUCH GOOD ON MY OWN.

I WAS A MESS AFTER DRUSILLA LEFT ME. NOW I'M A DOZEN TIMES WORSE.

I'D NEVER ADMIT THIS IF YOU WEREN'T A DROOLING VEGETABLE, BUT I'VE ALWAYS *ADMIRED* THE WAY YOU MOVED ON FROM THE SLAYER.

FOUND WORK... SAW OTHER WOMEN... BUILT A LIFE OF YOUR OWN.

I'LL TELL YOU *THIS*, MATE!

I'D GIVE *ANYTHING* TO KNOW HOW *YOU* GOT OVER HER.

KESSH

WHEN I DO, I'LL LET YOU KNOW.

YOU-- DOES THIS MEAN--

YEAH. GILES'S SOUL WAS DRAWN OUT.

THEN I--THEN YOU--

THEN MY BRILLIANT PLAN *WORKED!*

PULLED YOU OUT OF THE VOID, DIDN'T I? KEPT YOU HERE WITH ALL THAT BOLLOCKS ABOUT THE SLAYER SO YOU DIDN'T ABSCOND WITH OLD RUPERT AND LEAVE US TO DEAL WITH ANGELUS.

UH-HUH.

NO NEED TO THANK ME. OF COURSE, IT'D BE THE DECENT THING TO DO...BUT I KNOW BETTER THAN TO EXPECT MANNERS FROM AN IRISHMAN.

OH. COULD'VE DONE THAT ANY-TIME, COULD YOU?

SPEND ENOUGH TIME WITH HOUDINI, YOU PICK THINGS UP. HELPS IF YOU DON'T MIND BREAKING YOUR THUMBS.

THANKS FOR KEEPING AN EYE ON ME. I NEVER WOULD'VE FORGIVEN MYSELF IF I HURT THEM.

YES, CAN'T HAVE YOU RIDDLED WITH *GUILT,* CAN WE...

DID YOU JUST *TEXT* ME? WHAT'S THIS, THEN?

ME THANKING YOU. NOT THE KIND OF THING I'D NORMALLY DO, BUT WITH SOME PEOPLE, "NORMAL" DOESN'T APPLY.

YOU JUST NEED TO GET BACK ON YOUR FEET. BUT YOU'RE OVER-THINKING EVERYTHING. TYING YOURSELF UP IN KNOTS.

CALL THAT NUMBER. I PROMISE YOU, THINKING WON'T BE A PROBLEM.

THE NEXT MORNING.

SO YOU'RE BACK TO NORMAL, GILES'S BODY IS REGENERATED, AND WE'VE GOT HIS SOUL IN THE ESSUARY.

YOU GONNA LET THE REST OF US IN ON THE GRAND RESURRECTION PLAN?

SOON.

ARE YOU FREAKIN' *KIDDING ME?* AFTER WHAT JUST HAPPENED? WHAT IF YOU TURN EVIL OR CRAZY? THAT HAPPENS TO YOU, LIKE, *WEEKLY.*

THERE *IS* NO PLAN, IS THERE? YOU'RE JUST WINGING THIS WHOLE THING.

THE HELL...?

IT'S NOT SOPHIE AND LAVINIA. THEY'RE IN THE DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM.

YOU MEAN *MY* BATH-ROOM.

BAM BAM BAM

HEY! SPIKE! IF YOU USE ALL THE HOT WATER I'M GONNA MAKE YOU *EAT* THAT STUPID JACKET--

HARMONY?

HEY. YOU'RE OUT OF HOT WATER.

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?

THAT'S *MY ROBE!*

HERE.

KEEP IT.

GOOD MORNING, SINNERS.

THANKS FOR THE TIP, ANGEL.

OKAY, IF YOU WANNA BE J-DATE FOR VAMPIRES THAT'S YOUR LITTLE SLICE OF CRAZY...BUT YOU BROUGHT *HARMONY* INTO *MY HOUSE?*

IF IT WERE ANYONE ELSE I WOULD'VE FELT SLEAZY. BUT HARMONY'S... HARMONY.

I COULDN'T STAND TO SEE HIM LIKE THAT. WAS *I* EVER THAT PATHETIC?

ONLY CONSTANTLY.

SO *HARMONY* LETS YOU REBOUND FROM THE GREAT LOVE OF YOUR LIFE?

LOT CLOSER THAN YESTERDAY.

OH, *BLONDIE BEAR...*

PARDON. NO REST FOR THE WICKED.

TOWEL!

I DON'T SEE YOU DRAGGING *DANIEL CRAIG* BACK HERE FOR ME.

COME ON, YOU'RE NOT THAT SHALLOW. LIKE I SAID, IF THAT WAS ANYONE BUT HARMONY I'D FEEL--

SLEAZY. RIGHT. AND NOTHING ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THOSE TWO IS SLEAZY AT ALL.

GUESS WHAT, BLONDIE BEAR, I FOUND SOME *TOYS* IN THE BASEMENT!

OOH, I'M ALL CHAINED UP AND HELPLESS. I HOPE THE *BIG BAD* DOESN'T COME IN HERE AND *RAVAGE* ME...

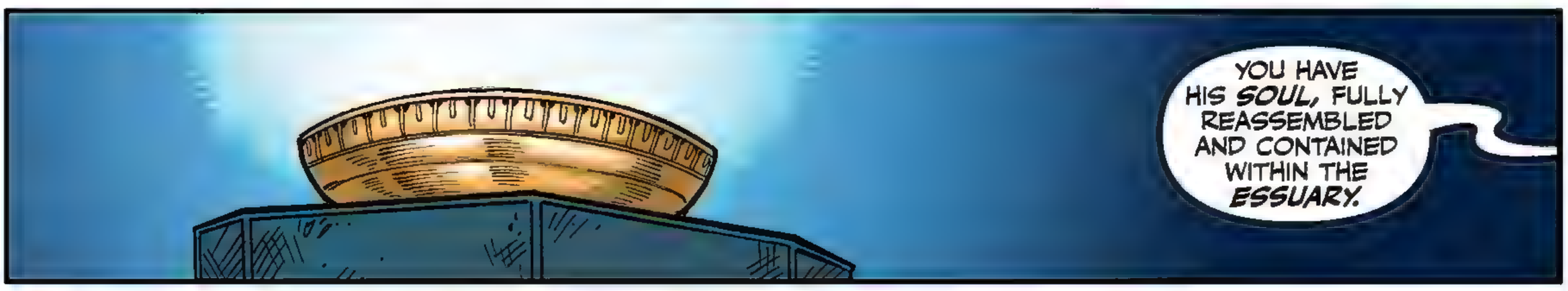
IF I'M NOT OUT IN SIX HOURS, SEND A SEARCH PARTY.

I'LL TAKE YOU OUT FOR BREAKFAST.

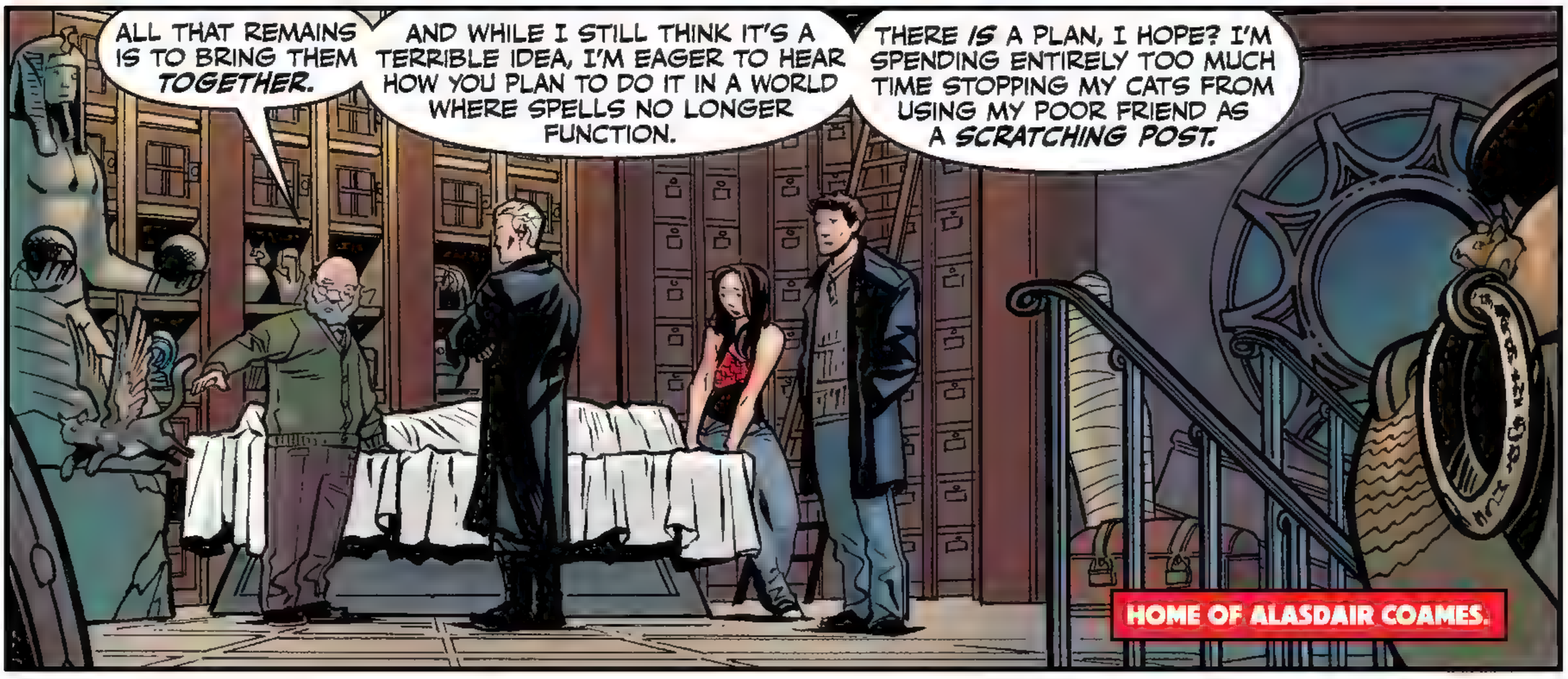
YOU'LL BURST INTO FLAME.

GOOD.

The End



WHAT YOU WANT, NOT WHAT YOU NEED



I RESEARCHED THIS AWHILE. HOPED I'D FIND SOME ARTIFACT THAT COULD RESURRECT A PERSON ON ITS OWN, JUST BY TOUCH OR WHATEVER.

NO SUCH THING.

THAT'S THE CONSENSUS. RESURRECTION'S A TRICKY BUSINESS. YOU ***NEED*** A SPELL.

I FOUND ONE.

THE ***LAZARENE INCANTATION?*** GOOD CHOICE. A HIGH RISK OF KILLING THE USER, BUT AS YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD, THAT WON'T BE AN ISSUE.

ONE SLIGHT PROBLEM, AND I REALIZE THIS MAY BE OVER YOUR HEAD--THERE'S ***NO BLOODY MAGIC*** ANYMORE.

YEAH. YOU SEEING A DISCONNECT ANYWHERE? OR IS THERE SOMETHING ***ELSE*** YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME?

SPELLS DON'T WORK BECAUSE THE ***SEED*** WAS DESTROYED. OTHER DIMENSIONS CLOSED OFF. NO MORE AMBIENT MYSTIC ENERGY.

WE JUST NEED A ***NEW SOURCE.*** AND ***WHISTLER*** SHOWED ME HOW TO GET IT.

CRAZY WHISTLER? MR. I'M-GONNA-KILL-TWO-BILLION-PEOPLE-TO-BRING-MAGIC-BACK WHISTLER?

NOT EXACTLY LOVING YOUR SOURCES OF INSPIRATION HERE, ANGEL.

WHISTLER, PEARL, AND NASH HAVE BEEN HOARDING MAGIC ITEMS. THEY PLAN TO TAP THEM FOR THEIR POWER.

I'M GOING TO DO THE SAME THING. ON A MUCH SMALLER SCALE.

OH, PERFECT. A ***MINI-***APOCALYPSE. ***THAT'S*** OKAY, THEN.

PEARL AND NASH? I RAN INTO THOSE NUTTERS AT THE RUINS OF SUNNYDALE. SEARCHING FOR FRAGMENTS OF THE SEED, THEY WERE. ALL MAKES SENSE NOW.

YOU *WHAT?*

DEEDLE DEET

GOTTA TAKE THIS. DON'T FIGURE I'LL MISS ANYTHING IMPORTANT.

YOU *KNOW* PEARL AND NASH? THEY WENT TO *SUNNYDALE?* AND YOU DIDN'T THINK IT WAS WORTH MENTIONING?

AM I MEANT TO BE A *MIND READER?* I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS BLOODY RELEVANT! LAST TIME I SAW THEM THEY WERE A PAIR OF IDIOT KIDS SHAGGING EVERY DEMON THEY COULD FIND.

WELL, THEY'RE A HELL OF A LOT DEADLIER *NOW!* DID THEY GET A PIECE OF THE SEED?

'COURSE NOT. I *CLEAN UP* MESSES, UNLIKE SOME PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM.

ACTUALLY, I OWE THOSE TWO A THUMPING. YOUR LATEST *WINDMILL TILT* JUST GOT A FAIR BIT MORE INTERESTING.

GOOD. 'CAUSE WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET.

OKAY...CAN SHE--

NO GO. THEY'VE GOT THEIR OWN CRISIS OVER THERE. SOME GIRL NAMED DAWN'S SICK. B SOUNDED PRETTY UPSET.

THAT WAS BUFFY.

DAWN?

SICK HOW?
I'M NOT SURE... GOT THE FEELING MAGIC WAS INVOLVED.
DO THEY NEED HELP?
THAT'S WHY SHE CALLED, BUT I TOLD HER WE WERE UP TO OUR NECKS IN IT. I FEEL BAD, BUT WE DON'T EVEN KNOW THIS CHICK.
I REALIZE YOU WEREN'T CLOSE, BUT BLOODY HELL, YOU FOUGHT THE *FIRST* TOGETHER.
DAWN *SUMMERS.* BUFFY'S *SISTER.*
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
BUFFY'S AN ONLY CHILD.
RIGHT. I CAN SEE THERE'S NO POINT EXPLAINING. I'M OFF.
YOU'RE KIDDING. A SECOND AGO YOU WANTED PAYBACK!
THIS IS *IMPORTANT,* SPIKE. IF YOU'RE TRYING TO IMPRESS BUFFY--
YOU KNOW ME. CAN'T RESIST A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS.
I SAVED *YOU,* DIDN'T I?
BESIDES, YOU'VE GOT THE VAMPIRE-WITH-A-SOUL QUOTA FILLED. YOU DON'T NEED ME.
SHE DOES.

IF WE COULD GET BACK ON TOPIC...I HAVE SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR PLAN, ANGEL.

DISTILLING MAGICAL ITEMS INTO PURE ENERGY IS INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS.

BESIDES, WHISTLER, PEARL, AND NASH ***STOLE*** ALL RUPERT'S ARTIFACTS. WHERE DO YOU PLAN TO GET ENOUGH TO--

OH.

NO. ABSOLUTELY NOT.

EVEN IF I WASN'T OPPOSED TO TAMPERING WITH THE FORCES OF LIFE AND DEATH, EACH OF THESE ITEMS IS PRECIOUS.

I WILL ***NEVER*** ALLOW YOU TO DESTROY THEM IN PURSUIT OF A SELFISH GOAL THAT COULD DO INCALCULABLE HARM.

WON'T *"ALLOW"*?

YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD STOP ME?

YOU--YOU'D ACTUALLY--

DON'T TRY TO GUILT TRIP ME. I'M BETTER AT IT THAN YOU'LL EVER BE.

YOU'RE PRETTY ATTACHED TO ALL THIS STUFF, AREN'T YOU?

WE'VE GOT THREE COSMICALLY POWERED NUTJOBS GOING AROUND STEALING EVERY MAGIC ITEM THEY CAN GET THEIR HANDS ON.

BUT THEY HAVEN'T HIT THE ***BIGGEST COLLECTION IN LONDON.***

THAT STRIKE YOU FUNNY?

'CAUSE THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY IT MAKES SENSE TO ME.

YOU WENT FROM ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL WIZARDS IN THE WORLD TO A TIRED OLD MAN.

WHISTLER AND HIS CREW WANT TO BRING MAGIC BACK BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.

THAT'D BE PRETTY NICE FOR YOU, WOULDN'T IT?

I KNEW IT. I ***KNEW*** THERE WAS SOMETHING HINKY ABOUT HIM. ALL MY INSTINCTS SAID ***RUN.***

JESUS, DOES ***EVERY*** OLD GUY IN THE WORLD GET HIS ROCKS OFF BY SCREWING ME OVER?

"WHAT DO YOU CALL IT WHEN ASSASSINS ACCUSE THE ASSASSIN? A LIE."

APOCALYPSE NOW. BRILLIANT FILM.

DON'T TOUCH THAT!

VERY WELL. YOU TOUCH IT, IF YOU WISH.

IT'S THE MASKSTONE. IT ABSORBS MYSTIC EMANATIONS.

IN ESSENCE, IT CLOAKS MY COLLECTION FROM ALL KNOWN MEANS OF MAGIC DETECTION.

OUR ENEMIES HAVEN'T STOLEN MY THINGS BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW THEY'RE HERE.

YOU'RE RIGHT, ANGEL. IF YOU WANT TO STEAL FROM ME, I CAN'T STOP YOU.

BUT THERE IS ONE THING YOU WILL NOT GET FROM ME.

AN EXCUSE TO JUSTIFY YOUR ACTIONS.

I KINDA BELIEVE HIM.

FAITH, PLEASE...FROM THE START, YOU'VE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THIS.

I REALIZE YOU FEEL YOU NEED RUPERT. HIS GUIDANCE... HIS WISDOM AND SUPPORT... AND, YES, HIS LOVE.

BUT IS THAT REASON TO TAKE SUCH CHANCES? CAN'T YOU SEE THAT IF YOU DO THIS, YOU'RE ONLY DOING IT FOR *YOURSELVES?*

SURE. NO SHORTAGE OF SELF-INTEREST HERE. ON *EITHER* SIDE.

ONLY THING THAT MAKES YOU SPECIAL ANYMORE IS THIS *STUFF.* IT'S ALL YOU GOT. I GET THAT.

BUT AS LONG AS WE'RE BEING HONEST, LET'S GO ALL OUT.

I READ G'S DIARIES. YOU GUYS WERE PRETTY GOOD FRIENDS.

SO YOU KNOW HE DIDN'T WANT TO DIE. THAT HE HAD A LOT OF *UNFINISHED BUSINESS...* STUFF HE WANTED TO DO.

I KNOW, 'CAUSE I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO IT *WITH* HIM.

BUT YOU'RE NOT ABOUT TO LOSE A COUPLE A YOUR MINT-IN-THE-BOX LIMITED EDITIONS TO GIVE HIM THAT CHANCE.

AIN'T NO SAINTS IN THIS ROOM.

BUT I'M NOT SINNER ENOUGH TO ROB AN OLD MAN. AND MAYBE ***HE*** CAN'T STOP YOU, ANGEL, BUT I ***CAN.*** G WOULD ***WANT*** ME TO. YOU GONNA MAKE ME?

NO. SORRY. I...I USED TO BE ABLE TO TRUST MY INSTINCTS--

YOU ALSO USED TO BE WRONG A LOT.

I'M NOT SURE WHERE ELSE WE CAN GET WHAT WE NEED IN ONE PLACE...OR EVEN SEVERAL.

WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT THOSE WACKOS HOARDING MAGIC CRAP. WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO TAKE 'EM OUT ANYWAY, SO...

I WAS HOPING TO BRING GILES BACK FIRST. GOING UP AGAINST WHISTLER, THERE'S...A PRETTY GOOD CHANCE I WON'T SURVIVE.

GRAMMAR'S NOT MY WHEELHOUSE, BUT I THINK YOU MEAN "WE."

FAITH, THIS ISN'T YOUR FIGHT. WHISTLER, PEARL, NASH...IT'S ***MY*** FAULT THEY'RE DOING THIS.

YEAH, AND IF THEY DO, THEY'RE GONNA KILL WHOLE ***CONTINENTS.*** THIS IS ABOUT ***STOPPING*** 'EM, NOT YOUR TIRED OLD REDEMPTION SONG.

SOMEONE HAS TO BRING GILES BACK. SOMEONE HAS TO MAKE THIS RIGHT. HE DESERVES ***BETTER.***

DON'T TELL ***ME*** WHAT HE DESERVES. I WENT TO ***WAR*** WITH THE GUY. YEAH, HE DIDN'T WANNA CHECK OUT, BUT HE WAS ALWAYS READY TO, FOR THE RIGHT CAUSE.

IF ALL THOSE PEOPLE DIE 'CAUSE WE PLAYED IT SAFE TO BRING HIM BACK...'CAUSE YOU MADE IT ABOUT ***YOU...AGAIN...***

I PROMISE YOU, WHEREVER HE IS, HE'LL BE IN ***HELL.***

SO ***SUCK IT UP.*** IT HURTS? WELCOME TO THE CLUB. PUT ON YOUR BIG BOY PANTS AND--

STOP.

IT'S YOURS. WHATEVER YOU NEED.

YOU MEAN IT?

CLEARLY YOU'RE GOING TO DO IT ANYWAY. I DON'T LIKE YOU TAKING FOOLISH RISKS WITH THE SAFETY OF HUMANITY...

BUT I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THAT NOT HELPING YOU COULD DO GREATER HARM THAN COOPERATING.

AND, DESPITE WHAT YOU MAY THINK...

...I MISS HIM TOO.

THANKS. FOR REAL.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO?

BRING LAVINIA AND SOPHRONIA HERE. THEY CARED FOR RUPERT AS MUCH AS ANYONE. AND THEY HAVE SOME EXPERIENCE WITH MYSTIC FORCES.

THE ONLY OTHER THING I ASK IS THAT YOU UNDERSTAND--*TRULY* UNDERSTAND--WHAT COULD GO WRONG.

IF YOU STILL WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT...I'LL SEE YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

HOME OF FAITH LEHANE.

LADIES...

...WE NEED TO TALK.

THEN IT'S FINALLY TIME. SPLENDID.

I'LL START THE RITUAL, SO THE DEATH CURSE HITS ME. BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE CASTING SPELLS, SO...

ALASDAIR WILL TAKE OVER. OF COURSE. AND IF HE SHOULD FALTER, SOPHIE OR I COULD STEP IN.

"HE DOESN'T WANT IT TO COME TO THAT. HE MOSTLY WANTS YOU FOR YOUR MEMORIES. YOUR TIES TO GILES.

"I DON'T PRETEND TO UNDERSTAND THE DETAILS, BUT TO REJOIN BODY AND SOUL, HE'S GOING TO BE REDUCED TO HIS ESSENCE AND REASSEMBLED. GUIDED BY *OUR* THOUGHTS."

IT'S CRUCIAL WE DON'T LOSE OUR FOCUS, OR HE COULD JUST... DISPERSE.

ANGEL...I REALIZE I CAN APPEAR FLIGHTY AND IMMATURE. BUT I WANT YOU TO LISTEN AND BELIEVE ME WHEN I TELL YOU THIS.

I THINK YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, WILL UNDERSTAND.

MY SISTER AND I ONCE DESTROYED OUR NEPHEW'S LIFE.

IF WE ARE GIVEN A CHANCE TO RECTIFY THAT DEED...

...THERE IS *NO POWER ON EARTH* THAT IS GOING TO STOP US.

YOU RECALL THE LAST CONVERSATION WE HAD ON THE SUBJECT?

YEAH. YOU SAID IF THIS WENT BAD, IT WAS UP TO ME TO SHUT IT DOWN.

DON'T MISUNDERSTAND. I HOPE WE SUCCEED, MORE THAN YOU KNOW. BUT I'VE SEEN...WHAT CAN HAPPEN.

"DURING THE WAR, THERE WAS A YOUNG MAN I...CARED FOR. HE DIED IN THE BLITZ.

"I COULDN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF LIVING WITHOUT HIM...THE PAIN IT WOULD CAUSE ME. AND WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO? I HAD *MAGIC.*"

I WAS...STUPID. STUPID AND *SELFISH.*

THE HARDEST THING I'VE EVER HAD TO DO WAS PUT IT RIGHT. END HIS SUFFERING.

I FEAR ANGEL HAS INVESTED TOO MUCH IN THIS SUCCEEDING TO KNOW WHEN TO LET GO. I THOUGHT YOU COULD BE MORE CLEAR HEADED.

BUT YOU SEEM TO HAVE BOUGHT IN QUITE HEAVILY.

SURE. I WANT HIM BACK. MAYBE EVEN *NEED* HIM BACK. I'VE MANAGED TO SCREW UP PRETTY DAMN BEAUTIFULLY ON MY OWN.

BUT I OWE GILES TOO MUCH TO LET HIM SUFFER.

IF IT COMES DOWN TO IT, I'LL STEP UP.

GOOD GIRL.

I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU.

SOPHIE'S GONNA BE FINE.

LAVINIA TOO. SHE ACTUALLY KIND OF IMPRESSED ME.

THEY'RE TOUGH OLD BROADS.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

I'M OKAY. JUST...I KNOW HOW MUCH CAN GO WRONG. DON'T WANT TO GET MY HOPES UP.

GOOD. BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.

ANGEL, EVEN IF THIS WORKS...IT'S NOT GONNA UNDO *TWILIGHT.*

IT'S NOT GONNA BRING BACK MAGIC, OR ANYONE ELSE WHO DIED.

IT WON'T CHANGE HOW PEOPLE *FEEL.*

I KNOW.

BUT GILES WILL BE ALIVE.

AND WITH ALL THE THINGS I'VE DONE...ALL THE MISTAKES...

I'LL HAVE PUT ONE RIGHT.

IS EVERYONE READY?

JUST DO IT.

THEN LET'S BEGIN.

FWOOSH

DAMN.

QUICKLY! APOLLO'S BRAZIER SHOULD HOLD THE ENERGY FOR A SHORT TIME, BUT IT *WILL* DISSIPATE, AND I'M NOT KEEN TO LOSE ANY MORE OF MY TREASURES THAN NECESSARY.

RIGHT. GIVE ME A SECOND...

SOMETHING'S DEFINITELY HAPPENING.

GNNH!

I...THINK THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO *KILL* ME.

GOOD. NOW GIVE ME THAT. YOUR ARAMAIC IS APPALLING.

I...I THINK IT'S WORKING.

I THINK IT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE--

SKRESSHH

WELL, WELL, WELL.

SOMEONE'S BEEN HOLDING OUT.

WE'VE GOT THIS!

STAY WITH THE SPELL!

KEEP THEM OFF MY BACK.

THIS PLACE IS A GOLD MINE.

EVERYONE I WANT TO KILL, ALL IN ONE PLACE.

IT'S LIKE *CHRISTMAS.*

VYRRZZ

YOU TOOK THE WORDS OUT OF MY MOUTH, *BOWIE.*

SOON TO BE FOLLOWED BY YOUR *TONGUE,* AND YOUR *ENTRAILS.*

YOU WOULD HAVE MADE YOURSELF A *PARADISE,* AND LEFT US TO *BURN.*

SEEMS ONLY *FAIR* TO RETURN THE FAVOR.

VRAASSHH

GGHH!

YOU THINK... YOU CAN STOP ME?

YOU THINK ANYTHING WILL STOP ME NOW?

AAOW!

YOU MISS TWILIGHT?

YOU WANT THE MURDERER?

YOU'VE GOT HIM!

OFF ME!

ZARK

NASH!

WAK

DID THAT MONGREL HURT YOU?

I'M... FINE...

HEY.

PRO TIP.

DON'T TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE BITCH WITH THE AXE.

AAA!

FILTH!
ANIMALS!
ZAK
ZAK
ZAK
UHH!
ALASDAIR!
TH-THE SPELL...
YOU CAN DO IT.
I CAN... BARELY... BREATHE! PLEASE!
OH, BUGGER...

LET'S GO.

NOT BEFORE I COOK THEIR ***HEARTS*** IN THEIR--

QUIT SCREWING AROUND.

WE GOT WHAT WE NEED. EYES ON THE PRIZE.

BKRAMM

I HATE NOT BEING ABLE TO FLY.

FORGET THEM. WHAT'S--

OH, NO.

NOT ANOTHER, YOU TWIT,

ALASDAIR! GET OVER HERE! NOW!

WAIT, I THINK I'VE GOT IT. I'VE--

GGNAAAAAGGHH!

OH MY GOD...

WHAT DID WE DO?

WHAT YOU WANT, NOT WHAT YOU NEED

PART 2

THE RESURRECTION SPELL WAS INTERRUPTED. ALASDAIR, CAN YOU--

Y-YES. JUST... HAD THE WIND KNOCKED OUT OF ME.

ABOUT BLOODY TIME. I WAS BUTCHERING ALL THIS ARAMAIC.

FOCUS, ALL OF YOU! PUT RUPERT GILES FOREMOST IN YOUR THOUGHTS!

PLEASE, RUPERT...

"...OUR CARELESSNESS DARKENED YOUR ENTIRE LIFE."

LET US MAKE IT RIGHT.

"LET US GIVE YOU A SECOND CHANCE."

C'MON, G.

"I NEVER SAID THIS TO ANYONE BEFORE IN MY LIFE...

"...BUT I NEED YOU."

JUST THIS.

"JUST LET ME FIX THIS."

WIZZ AHHH

...RUPERT GILES?

YES, YES. YOU'VE RESURRECTED ME. HUZZAHS ALL AROUND.

BUT THERE IS AN ***EXTINCTION-LEVEL CRISIS*** UNFOLDING, SO CAN WE ALL PLEASE PICK OUR JAWS UP OFF THE FLOOR AND ATTEND TO THE BUSINESS AT HAND?

GOOD HEAVENS, PEOPLE. THIS ISN'T YOUR FIRST EXPOSURE TO MAGIC.

SURELY YOU'VE SEEN ***STRANGER*** THINGS.

OH...

...BUGGER!

WHAT HAVE YOU IDIOTS *DONE?*

LAVINIA, SOPHRONIA... WHEN I TOLD YOU ALL TO FOCUS ON RUPERT, YOU *DID* IMAGINE HIM AS AN *ADULT?*

WELL... LET'S BE HONEST. GRAY HAIR IS *SO* UNATTRACTIVE.

BESIDES, THEY'RE FAR CUTER AT THIS AGE, AREN'T THEY, BEFORE THE HORMONES RUIN EVERYTHING?

FRANKLY, I PICTURED HIM YOUNGER. TEN, PERHAPS. HE APPEARS AT LEAST TWELVE.

MM. HE'LL BE GETTING SPOTS SOON. BEST TO START A SKIN CARE REGIMEN NOW. TRY TO MINIMIZE THE DAMAGE...

YOU HAVE RUINED MY LIFE! AGAIN!

IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY. WE *DID* IT.

I MEAN, YEAH, THERE WERE HICCUPS. BUT WE PULLED OFF RESURRECTION IN A WORLD WITH NO MAGIC. THIS IS JUST A LITTLE GLITCH.

WE'LL...I DON'T KNOW, FIND AN ARTIFACT THAT'LL AGE YOU.

OH, NOT TOO MUCH. HE WAS GETTING SUCH DEEP CROW'S FEET. MOISTURIZER WAS A FOREIGN CONCEPT TO THIS ONE, NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRIED.

IT MAY NOT HAVE WORKED OUT EXACTLY LIKE WE WANTED. BUT COME ON, THIS IS GREAT. THIS IS ***AMAZING.***

RIGHT, FAITH?

IN YOUR HEAD... IT'S ***YOU,*** RIGHT?

THE SAME G WHO PLAYED MR. MIYAGI TO MY DANIEL-SAN.

I...

...BEG PARDON?

THAT IS, ***YES!***

YES, OF COURSE. I HAVE ALL THE MEMORIES, THOUGHT PROCESSES... I'M THE MAN YOU KNEW IN ***EVERY WAY.***

GREAT.

THEN WE'RE FIVE BY FIVE.

SORRY. I KNOW THIS IS HARD FOR YOU. LIKE BUFFY, WHEN SHE CAME BACK.

AT PEACE, THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN--

BUFFY WAS IN ***HEAVEN.*** YANKED FROM A STATE OF PARADISE BACK INTO A WORLD OF PAIN. THAT DID NOT HAPPEN TO ME.

I WAS ALTERNATELY IN THRALL TO A ***DEMON*** AND TRAPPED WITHIN ***YOU,*** CAPTIVE AUDIENCE TO A CENTURY OF ***ATROCITIES*** AND YOUR SCHIZOPHRENIC MIX OF GUILT AND DELIGHT OVER THEM.

NO, I WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR TAKING ME AWAY FROM ALL THAT...

...IF NOT FOR THE FACT THAT YOU ***KILLED*** ME IN THE FIRST PLACE, THEN RESURRECTED ME USING ***OBSCENE SORCERY*** THE LIKES OF WHICH I'D ***NEVER*** CONDONE--

--WHILE THERE'S AN ***APOCALYPTIC CRISIS*** YOU SHOULD BE ATTENDING TO INSTEAD! BUT PUTTING ALL THAT AND EVERYTHING ***ELSE*** YOU'VE DONE TO ME ASIDE FOR A MOMENT...

YOU BROUGHT ME BACK UNRECOGNIZABLE!

WHAT KIND OF LIFE CAN I HAVE LIKE THIS? I'M TOO YOUNG TO DRIVE! TO WORK! TO HAVE AN ADULT RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT GETTING THE WOMAN ***JAILED!***

YOU'VE MAIMED ME!

I'M SORRY. WHAT YOU SAID WAS ENTIRELY VALID. BUT THAT WAS *ADORABLE.*

OH, THE FLAILING *SLEEVES!*

IF I MAY--

RUPERT, YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT. THERE IS A CRISIS THAT REQUIRES OUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.

WHISTLER, NASH, AND PEARL TOOK MY ENTIRE COLLECTION OF OCCULT ARTIFACTS. IF THEY ARE NOT YET READY TO UNLEASH THEIR PLAGUE OF MAGIC, THEY ARE *VERY CLOSE.*

I DO NOT MEAN TO BELITTLE WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU. BUT I'M CERTAIN YOU AGREE THAT IT MUST BE OF SECONDARY CONCERN.

Y-YES. YES, OF COURSE.

I'LL GO AFTER THEM.

DON'T BE A FOOL. YOU'LL NEED ALL THE HELP YOU CAN GET.

BUFFY! I HAVE TO TELL *HER!* SHE'LL BE--

NO!

PLEASE, DON'T. SHE CAN'T CROSS THE OCEAN IN TIME TO BE OF ANY HELP, AND GIVEN WHAT WE'RE FACING...

...WELL, I SHOULD LIKE TO FEEL MY RESURRECTION WILL LAST MORE THAN A MATTER OF *HOURS* BEFORE MAKING ANY BOLD ANNOUNCEMENTS.

SURE. I UNDERSTAND.

OKAY. WE'RE GONNA NEED TO GO INTO THIS LOADED FOR BEAR.

ALASDAIR, THEY DIDN'T TAKE YOUR LIBRARY. CHECK FOR ANY INTEL THAT'LL HELP US. ABOUT WHISTLER, DISTILLING MAGIC, WHATEVER.

GILES, YOU TOO. WE'LL HEAD BACK TO YOUR--I MEAN, FAITH'S PLACE.

I SEEM TO RECALL STRATEGY BEING *MY* ROLE...

SOPHIE, LAVINIA, CALL IN ALL YOUR FAVORS. WE NEED ARTIFACTS, WEAPONS, ANYTHING THAT'LL HELP US.

WE DON'T HAVE MANY FAVORS OWED *US*, ACTUALLY...

TENDS TO BE THE OTHER WAY 'ROUND, DOESN'T IT?

BUT WE'LL DO OUR BEST.

I'LL HIT UP SOME CONTACTS IN DEMONTOWN.

FAITH, WE NEED--

I KNOW WHAT I NEED.

MEET YOU BACK AT THE HOUSE.

HOME OF FAITH LEHANE.
FORMER HOME OF RUPERT GILES.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

OF COURSE. SHARING YOUR BODY BROUGHT ME QUITE UP TO DATE ON THE FINER DETAILS OF THE ***UNGODLY MESS*** YOU'VE MADE OF EVERYTHING.

I'M FINDING LITTLE ABOUT WHISTLER. BUT IF THEY'RE DISTILLING MYSTIC ARTIFACTS INTO ENERGY, THERE MIGHT BE ENOUGH AMBIENT MAGIC FOR SPELLS TO WORK, SO THESE GRIMOIRES--

WHAT THE BLOODY HELL ARE YOU ALL STARING AT?

SORRY. I KNOW YOU'RE NOT THRILLED ABOUT THE NEW BODY. I JUST--YOU'RE ***ALIVE.***

I KNOW. ***FOCUS.*** SOPHIE, DID YOU GET WEAPONS?

OH, NOT A ONE. WE'VE BROUGHT SOMETHING FAR BETTER.

TOPSHOP

TOPMAN'S WAS HAVING A ***SMASHING*** SALE ON ROCK-INSPIRED FASHIONS. BOWIE, JAGGER...ALL THOSE BLOKES FROM YOUR ERA, RUPERT. WITH A MODERN TWIST, OF COURSE.

OOH! THAT. IS. ***ADORABLE!***

I WASN'T RESURRECTED.

I'M IN ***HELL.***

OH... FAITH.

HEY. I WAS JUST COMING DOWN. RAIDED SOME DEMON DENS FOR WEAPONS.

HIDING FROM YOUR GREAT-AUNTS, HUH?

THEY SEEM TO REGARD ME AS A LIVING DRESS-UP DOLL.

IT'S HORRIBLE. THEY'RE ***STRONGER*** THAN ME. IF NOT FOR THE HAIR GEL THEY SLATHERED ME WITH, I'D NEVER HAVE SLIPPED FREE.

ARE *YOU* ALL RIGHT?

PFFT. JUST TIRED.

I WAS NEVER A WEEPER TILL I STARTED HANGING OUT WITH ANGEL. IT'S LIKE AN ANGST CONTACT HIGH.

I, AH...I DO APOLOGIZE. FOR ANY INAPPROPRIATE... ***STARING*** ON MY PART.

IT AIN'T YOUR FAULT. YOU'RE A TWELVE-YEAR-OLD BOY.

BUT I'M ***NOT!***

I'M A ***GROWN MAN,*** DAMN IT ALL! I WEAR SAVILE ROW CLOTHES AND DRINK DARJEELING TEA AND APPRECIATE THE NUANCES OF DOSTOYEVSKY IN THE ***ORIGINAL RUSSIAN!***

I AM NOT SOME FLIGHTY, HORMONAL ***CHILD*** WHO BELIEVES THE WORLD REVOLVES AROUND HIM AND THROWS TANTRUMS WHEN HE DOESN'T GET HIS WAY!

UM.

THAT WOULD HAVE SOUNDED BETTER IF MY VOICE HADN'T CRACKED.

OH, GOD. HOW DOES ANYONE SURVIVE ADOLESCENCE?

HEY, I'M *STILL* WAITING FOR THINGS TO START MAKING SENSE.

I'M SORRY, FAITH.

FOR WHAT?

FAILING YOU. LEAVING YOU.

COMING BACK AS THE POLAR OPPOSITE OF WHAT YOU NEED.

WHAT I *NEED* IS TO GET MY ACT TOGETHER.

STOP LOOKING FOR A DADDY FIGURE WHO'LL TAKE CARE OF ME. TELL ME WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO DO AND MAKE ME FEEL ALL *SPECIAL*.

ALL THAT EVER DOES IS BITE ME IN THE ASS. AND IT'S NOT LIKE I EVER HAD IT, ANYWAY, SO WHAT'S THE BIG LOSS?

IT'S A *TREMENDOUS* LOSS.

IT'S SOMETHING EVERY CHILD DESERVES. SOMETHING YOU NEVER HAD.

IT'S AS IMPORTANT THAT YOU GRIEVE IT...

...AS IT IS THAT YOU MOVE ON.

I *AM* GLAD YOU'RE BACK, Y'KNOW?

YOU SPENT YOUR WHOLE LIFE HELPING OTHER PEOPLE FIGURE OUT THEIRS. YOU DESERVE A SHOT AT YOUR OWN.

I KNOW THIS SOUNDS LIKE ONE OF THOSE LIES GROWNUPS TELL KIDS... BUT IT'S TRUE. WHAT COUNTS IS WHO YOU ARE INSIDE.

THE PACKAGE YOU COME IN DOESN'T MATTER.

I'M GONNA ASSUME YOU HAVE A ROLL OF QUARTERS IN YOUR POCKET.

POUND COINS, ACTUALLY.

THAT WOULD BE MORE CREDIBLE.

HEY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. LIKE ANGEL SAID, WE'LL FIX YOU UP.

AND EVEN IF WE CAN'T...YOU KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE WOULD *KILL* FOR A DO-OVER ON THEIR LIVES?

THOSE WISHES ARE PREDICATED ON RELIVING THE ***SAME*** LIFE, WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT. THAT IS NOT MY CIRCUMSTANCE.

DO YOU KNOW, I'D FINALLY MANAGED TO FIGURE OUT QUITE A BIT? ABOUT MYSELF, THE WORLD, MY PLACE IN IT.

NOW ALL THAT'S GONE. I FIND MYSELF STUMBLING INTO AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE, GROPING IN THE DARK, SURROUNDED BY A WORLD THAT MAKES NO SENSE.

WELCOME TO THE CLUB.

YOU MAY HAVE ***WANTED*** THE OLD ME BACK.

BUT YOU DON'T NEED HIM ANYMORE, FAITH.

I SAID I'D COME BACK AS THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT YOU NEED. I SHOULD AMEND THAT STATEMENT.

IN SHARING ANGEL'S BODY, HIS MIND, I HAVE SEEN ALL YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH SINCE MY PASSING. ALL YOU'VE DONE. AND I KNOW THIS.

NONE OF YOU DO.

HOME OF ALASDAIR COAMES.

HELLO, ALASDAIR.

RUPERT! DID YOU COME ALONE?

YES, DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF THE KINDLY SOULS WHO STOPPED TO ENQUIRE IF I'D LOST MY MUM.

I SEE YOU HAD THE SAME THOUGHT. THAT WE MIGHT RECAPTURE SOME OF OUR FORMER GLORY AS SPELL CASTERS.

IF NOT, I'M UNCERTAIN WHAT USE WE CAN BE.

THANK YOU, ALASDAIR. FOR HELPING THEM, IN MY ABSENCE. I'M SORRY FOR WHAT IT'S COST YOU.

NONSENSE. IT WAS GOOD TO HAVE A HAND IN THE GAME AGAIN. AND FRANKLY, I'M NOT SURE HOW MUCH HELP I ACTUALLY WAS.

RUPERT...I HAVE A CONFESSION. THROUGHOUT, I ADVISED ANGEL AND FAITH TO LEAVE YOU DEAD.

I'D EXPECT NO LESS. I'D HAVE SAID THE SAME.

OH...YES, OF COURSE.

AND LOOK WHAT HAPPENED: AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THEIR ACTIONS, OUR ENEMIES NOW HAVE THE POWER TO MURDER BILLIONS. YOU WERE *RIGHT,* ALASDAIR.

PERHAPS.

SODA

BUT IT *IS* GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, OLD FRIEND.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? BEING SO YOUNG?

CONFUSING. YOUR BODY IS THIS...*ALIEN THING* YOU HAVE MINIMAL CONTROL OVER.

AH. LIKE BEING OLD, THEN.

I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY. I'M COMING TO THE INESCAPABLE REALIZATION THAT I AM NOT SIMPLY MY OLD SELF IN A NEW BODY.

EVERYTHING'S SO OVERWROUGHT. I'M POSITIVELY *HUMMING* WITH NERVOUS ENERGY.

THERE'S GOT TO BE A PILL FOR THIS.

BETTER THAN BEING DEAD, THOUGH?

PREFERABLE TO BEING SLAVE TO A DEMON FOR ALL ETERNITY. MARGINALLY.

AND DO YOU KNOW HOW YOU GOT THIS WAY?

MY MENTAL *GREAT-AUNTS* PREFERRED ME--

YES. THEY PICTURED YOU AS YOU WERE WHEN THEY FIRST BROUGHT OUT YOUR MYSTIC TALENTS AT AGE TEN. BUT YOU ARE *OLDER* THAN THAT.

THERE MUST BE A *REASON.*

I SUPPOSE WE ALL HAVE A "WHAT IF" IN OUR LIVES. IF I'D ONLY MARRIED THIS WOMAN, TAKEN THAT JOB...

FOR ME, IT WAS ENTERING WATCHER ACADEMY AS AN *OLDER* BOY. MORE ABLE TO ENDURE THE FRIGHTFUL EXPERIENCES.

PERHAPS I'D HAVE MADE WISER CHOICES. NEVER SUMMONED EYGHON. BEEN A BETTER WATCHER. A BETTER *MAN.*

AS I WAS BEING RESURRECTED--REMADE--I FELT MYSELF BECOMING THAT TEN-YEAR-OLD AGAIN. THAT FRIGHTENED, OVERWHELMED CHILD. I FOUGHT *AGAINST* IT.

AND YOU GOT YOUR WISH. NOW WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH IT?

HOME OF FAITH LEHANE.
RIGHT. WE HAVE WORK TO DO.
WE'VE BEEN OVER THE COMBAT STRATEGY. THE GOAL IS NOT TO WIN, WHICH IS UNLIKELY, BUT TO PREVENT THE ENEMY FROM CARRYING OUT THEIR PLAN.
THE ESSENTIAL TASK IS DEPRIVING THEM OF MAGIC ITEMS. *DESTROYING* THEM.
ANGEL, FAITH, YOUR ROLE IS PHYSICAL COMBAT.
ALASDAIR AND I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO TAP INTO AMBIENT MYSTIC ENERGY. USE IT TO CAST SPELLS. IT'S A BIT OF A LONG SHOT...WELL, MORE THAN A BIT.
FAILING THAT...
WE RESORT TO MORE CONVENTIONAL OPTIONS.
I'M GOING TO SMELL LIKE PETROL FOR A WEEK.

LISTEN...THIS IS PRACTICALLY A SUICIDE MISSION. WHISTLER COULD KILL US ALL HIMSELF. I WISH YOU'D LET ME--

WHY DO YOU EVEN BOTHER SAYING CRAP LIKE THAT?

ANGEL DOES RAISE A POINT I WISH TO ADDRESS. OUR ADVERSARIES MUST BE STOPPED. YOU'VE LEFT MESSAGES FOR BUFFY, WILLOW, AND OTHERS.

I'D FEEL BETTER IF WE'D ACTUALLY REACHED SOME OF THEM, BUT WE'VE DONE ALL WE CAN TO ENSURE THE FIGHT WILL GO ON, SHOULD WE FALL.

IF SOME OF US DO--INCLUDING MYSELF--I WANT YOUR WORD THAT YOUR ENERGIES WILL REMAIN FOCUSED ON THE TASK AT HAND.

I AM... GRATEFUL FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE FOR ME. TO KNOW THAT ONE IS MISSED... VALUED...

FORGIVE ME. I HAD NO INTENTION OF--WELL.

WHAT I MEAN TO SAY IS, IT IS APPRECIATED.

AND I DO NOT WANT YOU TO TRY IT AGAIN.

EVEN IF RESURRECTION WERE AN OPTION...WHICH, WITH EYGHON SLAIN, I DARESAY IT IS NOT...IF I DIE, I AM CONTENT TO REMAIN THAT WAY.

AS AM I.

I SHOULD'VE DIED THREE CENTURIES AGO.

NEVER FIGURED I'D LAST THIS LONG.

YOU'RE ALL DAFT. I WANT TO BE RESURRECTED. WITH A TIGHTER TUMMY THIS TIME.

I'LL RESURRECT YOU.

YOU'RE A LOVE.

DULY NOTED. NOW THAT'S OUT OF THE WAY, ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO LOCATE OUR TARGETS.

ANGEL, YOU OBTAINED SOMETHING APPROPRIATE?

ENCHANTED LODESTONE. USED TO BE A DIME A DOZEN. GETTING HARDER TO COME BY, BUT THEY CAN STILL BE HAD FOR THE RIGHT PRICE.

EXCELLENT. IT'LL BE DRAWN TO CONCENTRATIONS OF MYSTIC ENERGY. I'LL SEARCH ALONG KNOWN LEY LINES...

THERE! IN THE COTSWOLDS.

NO, THAT'S THE ***DEEPER WELL.*** THEY WOULDN'T GO NEAR IT...TOO MUCH RISK OF WAKING AN OLD ONE.

BUT THAT'S QUITE A FLARE OF ENERGY, FOR A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE'S DORMANT. IT BEARS INVESTIGATING, IF--

HANG ON. THERE'S SOMETHING CLOSER... BUILDING INTENSITY BY THE MOMENT--

BRAKCH!

OH.

OH DEAR.

WHAT?

THEY'RE IN HACKNEY. NEVER EVEN LEFT LONDON. WHICH CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING.

THEY'RE DOING IT NOW.

"THEY'RE UNLEASHING THE PLAGUE."

GO. WE'LL CATCH UP.

"IT'S ALL COMING TOGETHER.

"THE OLD WORLD WASN'T WORKING ANYMORE.

"THIS NEW ONE'S DYING.

"AIN'T NO HALF STEPS.

"YOU WANT TO CHANGE THINGS, YOU GOTTA BE *BOLD*."

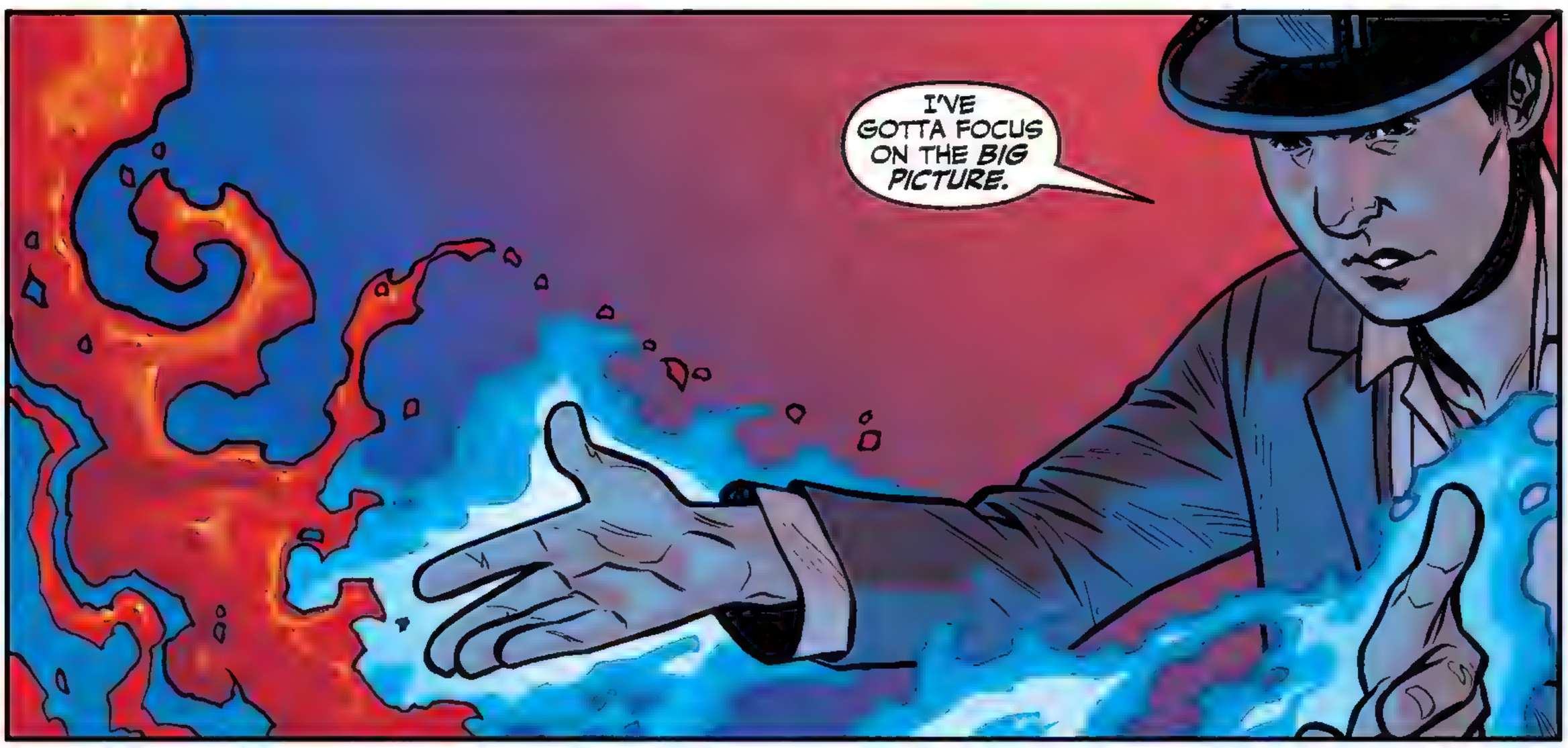
FROM HERE ON OUT, EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE DIFFERENT.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER...

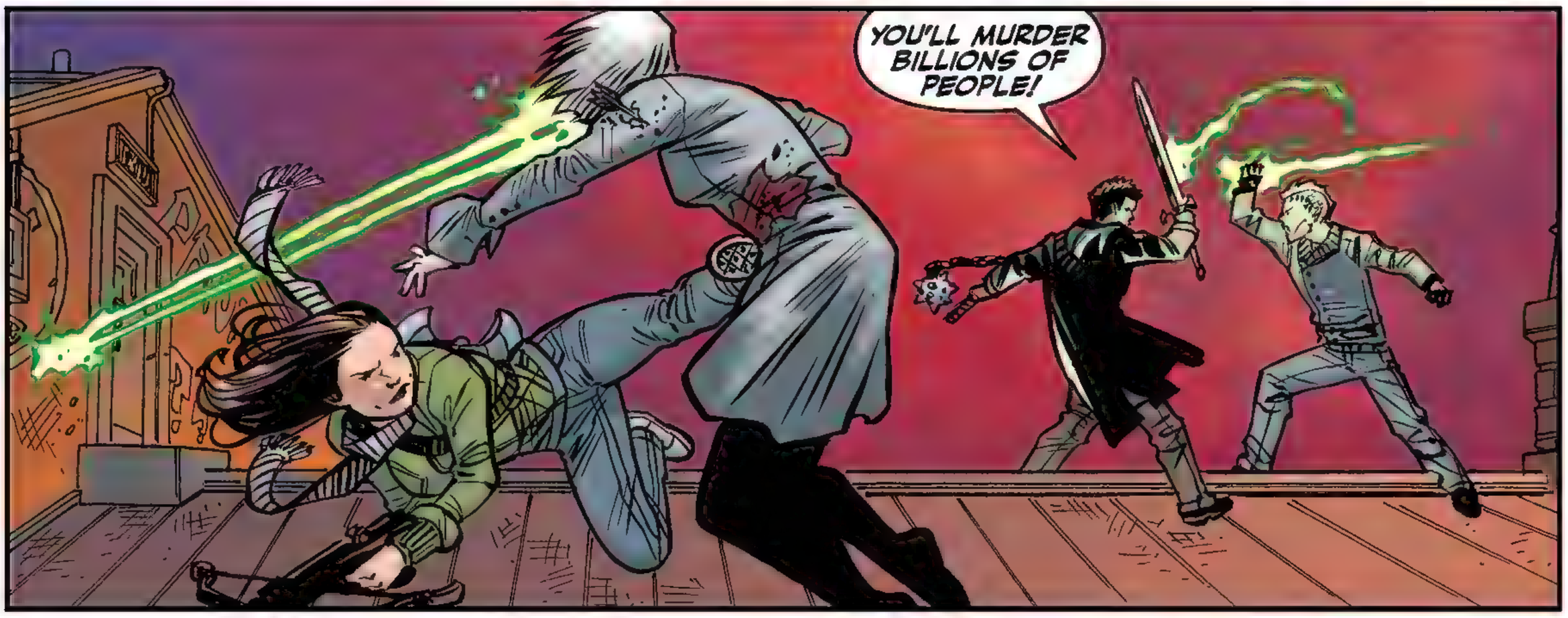
...IT ALL ENDS HERE.

WHAT YOU WANT, NOT WHAT YOU NEED

PART 3



WHISTLER! STOP IT!


YOU'LL MURDER BILLIONS OF PEOPLE!

EASILY DISTRACTED, AREN'T YOU?
I DON'T HAVE A STAKE ON ME. BUT DECAPITATION, I CAN DO.

LAST TIME, ANGEL. I'M NOT HERE TO DESTROY THE WORLD.
I'M HERE TO SAVE IT.

IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE, DEAR.

THIS WORLD WILL EVOLVE, KICKING AND SCREAMING.

FWOOSH

WE'VE WON.

NNH!

NOT--

KNK

--YET.

CHTT

DAMN IT, KEEP 'EM BACK!

I'M TRYING... TO DISTILL MAGIC... INTO ITS *PUREST FORM.*

ONE WRONG MOVE... AND LONDON'S A *SMOKING CRATER.*

OKAY. GOT IT.

WONDERFUL. HOW ABOUT SOME HELP?

SURE. JUST GIMME A SECOND...

...TO CATCH MY BREATH...

OR NOT.

SHAASHH

AAGH!

SHUT THIS DOWN, ANGEL. I'VE GOT ALBINO BOWIE.

NADIRA? GET *OUT* OF HERE!

NOT A CHANCE.

NNK!

THEY *KILLED* MY SISTERS. *DESTROYED* MY WORLD!

I'M A *SLAYER!*

TO STAND AGAINST THE FORCES OF DARKNESS!

BRAK

TO STOP THE SPREAD OF THEIR EVIL!

SKANG

THIS IS WHY I'M HERE!

GIVE ME THE PLAGUE.

THAT'S A NASTY WORD FOR SOMETHING THAT'S GONNA SAVE THE PLANET.

BY MURDERING HALF OF IT.

A THIRD. I KNOW, MATH'S HARD.

WHISTLER, I DON'T WANT TO KILL YOU.

TOOK THE WORDS OUTTA MY MOUTH. I THINK YOU'RE FORGETTING WHO WIPED THE FLOOR WITH WHO LAST TIME.

WHAT YOU JUST DID TOOK A LOT OUT OF YOU.

SURE.

BUT NOT NEAR ENOUGH.

MY DAD WAS AN AGENT OF THE ***POWERS THAT BE.*** GOOD-LOOKIN' GUY.

I HAD A MOM, TOO. PUREBLOOD DEMON.

I ALSO TAKE AFTER HER.

FROM THE DAY I MET YOU, I KNEW.

WE'D SAVE THE WORLD TOGETHER...

...OR ONE OF US...

...WOULD KILL THE OTHER.

SSSS

FWOOSH!..

SORRY IT HAD TO BE THIS.

RRAA!

AOW!

LOOK AT HER.

THAT'S *VINTAGE,* YOU GUTTERSNIPE.

NOTHING THERE BUT HATE.

I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HELPING HER.

BASTARD.

GIVING HER SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR.

DIE!

BUT SHE REJECTED ALL THE GOOD IN HER LIFE.

ALL SHE'S GOT LEFT IS THIS.

DIE!!

JUST LIKE HER TEACHER.

NO. IT'S NOT TOO LATE. I WON'T LET IT BE.

NADIRA, DON'T! FIGHT SMART!

SOUND ADVICE.

NUH!

PAYING ATTENTION'S A GOOD START.

THIS SORRY LITTLE GIRL IS YOUR PROTÉGÉ? I'D IMAGINE YOU'VE INVESTED A LOT IN HER.

OH, BROTHER, DEAR...

TEACH FAITH A LESSON IN *LOSS.*

NO!

YES.

FWAASSHH

HATE CAN MAKE YOU STRONG, GIRL.

IT CAN ALSO MAKE YOU *CARELESS.*

NADIRA! YOUR THREE! HE'S--

VRAASHH

NADIRAAA!

NADIRA...

FASTER, LAVINIA! WE'LL MISS IT!

ONE DOES NOT "MISS" AN APOCALYPSE, AUNT SOPHIE. ONE EITHER PREVENTS IT OR DIES IN IT.

WELL, RUPERT DEAR, JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE IS A HUNDRED YEARS OLD, SHE NEED NOT DRIVE LIKE IT.

PERHAPS I'D BE MORE IN A HURRY IF I HAD ANY FAITH IN THE SAD LITTLE TRINKETS ALASDAIR GAVE US. RUNE STONES? REALLY?

THEY'LL PROTECT US AGAINST THE MAGIC PLAGUE, AND OFFER A MILD DEFENSE AGAINST DIRECT ATTACKS. BUT I DO WISH I HADN'T LOST ALL MY OFFENSIVE ARTIFACTS.

PERHAPS WE WON'T NEED THEM. DO YOU FEEL THAT, ALASDAIR? THE TASTE OF OZONE AND JASMINE. THE TICKLE IN YOUR CEREBELLUM.

THERE'S MAGIC IN THE AIR.

THEY WOULD BE ON A BLOODY ROOFTOP. MY KNEES HAVE BEEN GIVING ME FITS.

REST YOURSELF, OLD MAN. WE'LL TAKE THE EXTRA WEAPONS UP.

REALLY? I HADN'T PEGGED YOU TWO FOR THE TYPE TO GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY.

JUST BECAUSE WE CHOOSE OUR FIGHTS A BIT MORE JUDICIOUSLY THAN SOME IN OUR FAMILY DOESN'T MAKE US COWARDS. WE'D PREFER THE WORLD NOT END TOO, YOU KNOW.

ALL THE BETTER. I NEED YOU IN A MORE FAMILIAR ROLE. ONE NO ONE'S PLAYED IN SOME TIME.

I'D THOUGHT THIS THE LONGEST OF LONG SHOTS. BUT FEELING THAT ENERGY, I'D SAY THE ODDS ARE AT LEAST EVEN.

SHALL WE ATTEMPT TO CAST A SPELL OR TWO?

LISTEN TO THAT SIZZLE. ALWAYS HAPPENS WITH THE *HIPPY* GIRLS.

BITCH! I'LL KILL YOU!

HOLD HER, PEARL. I'LL FUSE THAT SASSY *MOUTH* SHUT.

NO! PRIORITIES!

WE NEED THE ENERGY IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE WHEN IT BLOWS! *MAXIMUM DISPERSAL!*

YOU'RE RIGHT.

TRY TO KEEP ONE OF THEM ALIVE FOR ME.

I DO *HATE* TO MISS A KILL.

DROP IT!

IT'S OVER, MAN.

I'M FINALLY GONNA FINISH WHAT WE STARTED.

WHAT WE STARTED--

--WAS TO HELP PEOPLE.

WROK

KNCH

THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT, ONCE I SAW WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

I WANTED TO SAVE PEOPLE. NOT MURDER THEM.

SOMETIMES IT'S THE SAME THING.

JUST A QUESTION OF WHICH PEOPLE.

BRAKK

THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, ANGEL. THAT'S WHY YOU RUINED THIS WHEN THE BODY COUNT COULDA STAYED IN THE MILLIONS.

YOU ALWAYS THINK THERE'S A WAY AROUND THE HARD CHOICES.

SOMETIMES THERE AIN'T.

SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA HURT FOLKS YOU REALLY DON'T WANNA.

ANGEL!

CATCH!

OH, BUGGER.

KLANK

CLOSE ENOUGH.

THRNCH

WELL, I'D SAY WE'VE DONE OUR PART, WOULDN'T YOU?

ABOVE AND BEYOND, I THINK.

OW!

NONE OF THIS MATTERS!

WE HAVE TO STOP NASH!

GOOD LUCK.

LAST I CHECKED--

FWOOSH

AGH!

--EVERYONE WHO CAN FLY IS ON *MY* TEAM.

I GOT YOUR BACK, ANGEL!

DON'T MISS!

BAT

CLANG

FIGHTING TO THE END. I LIKE THAT.

BUT IT *IS* THE END.

FZZT

DAMN IT! NOTHING'S WORKING!

THERE'S *ENERGY*, BUT IT'S TOO WILD. IT WON'T BE CONTROLLED.

THEN LET'S NOT FORCE IT ANY MORE THAN WE HAVE TO.

CAFE

IF WE CAN'T OUTRIGHT CONTROL IT, PERHAPS WE CAN LURE IT IN...

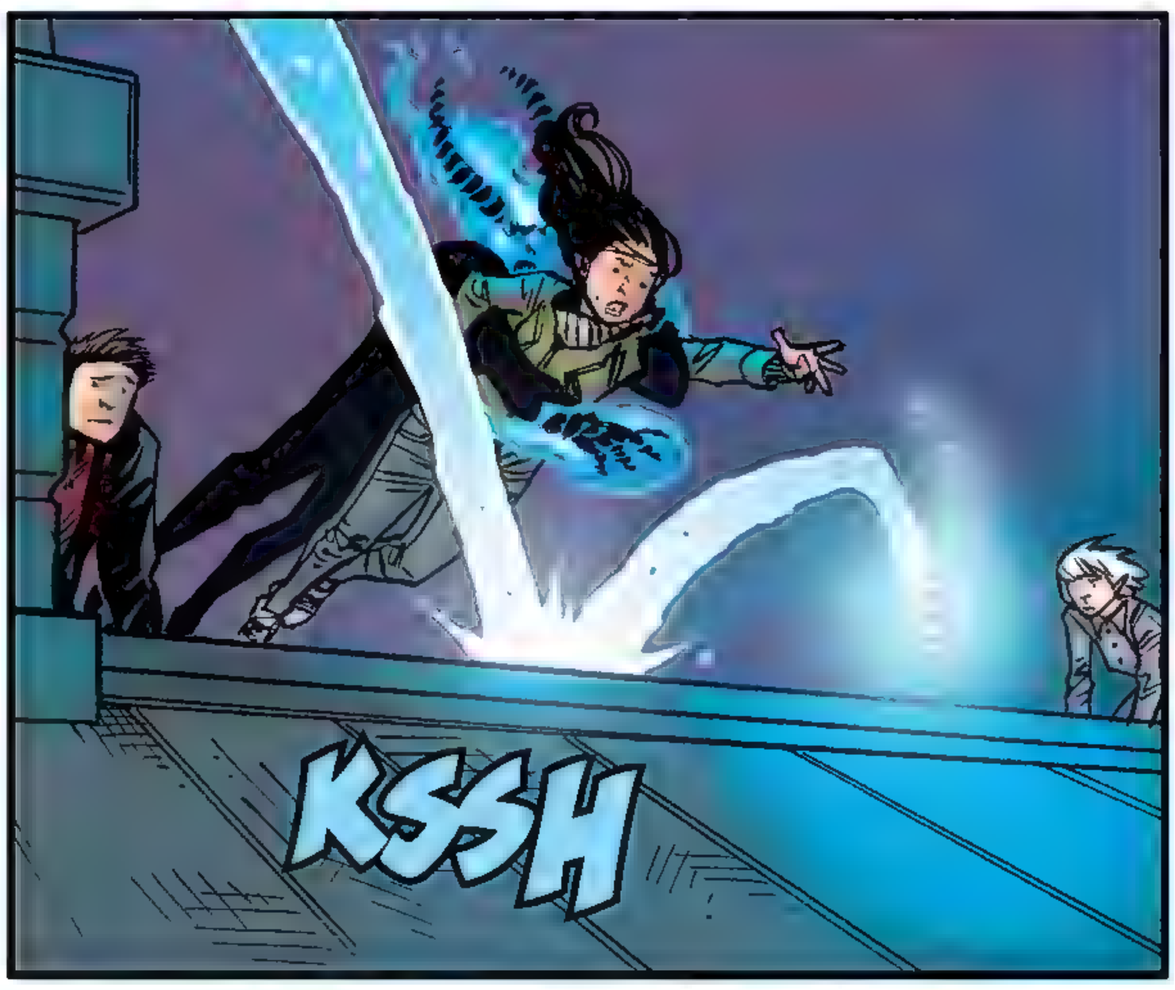
...AND NUDGE IT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

PLEASE...

HM?

GNAAGH!

CHOOSH


KSSH

KSH

WHAT'S THIS, THEN?
OOH, IT'S LOVELY...
...LIKE FAIRY DUST.
AAH! BLOODY HELL, THAT--
OH!
--HURTS
AAAAAGH
AIIIE!

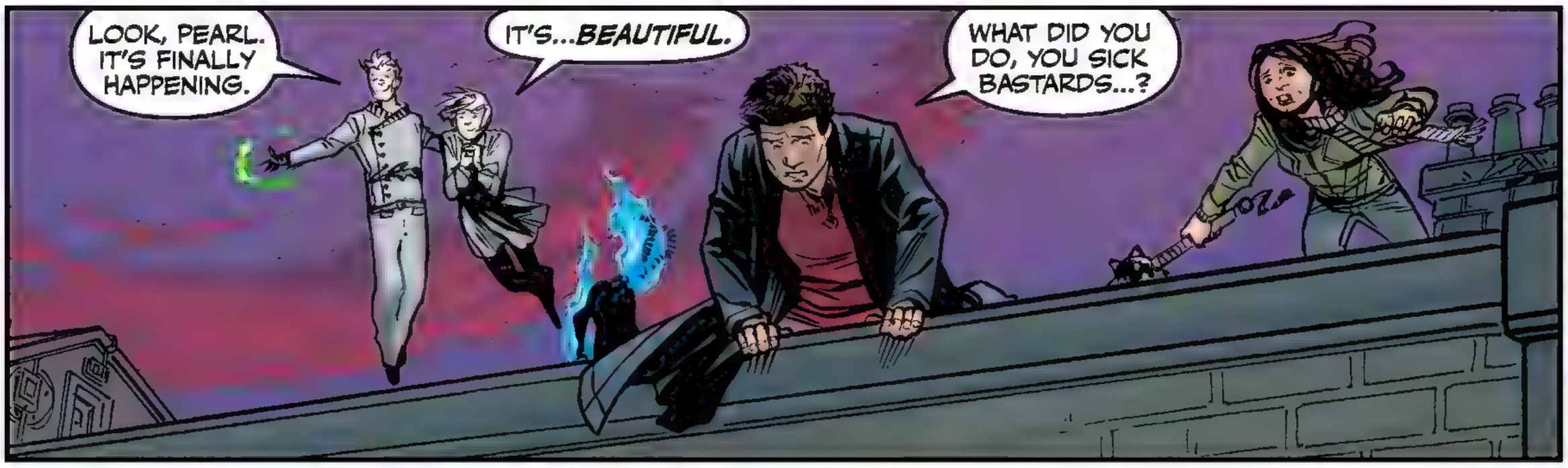
WHAT'S HAPPENING?

AAoooooooo

THE FUTURE. IT'S FINALLY HERE.

FIRST HACKNEY...

"...SOON, THE WORLD."



WHAT YOU WANT, NOT WHAT YOU NEED

PART 4

ANGEL, DOWN!

VRASSH

NASH. PEARL. GET THE ORB.

"IT'S DOWN THERE SOMEWHERE. BUILDING TO CRITICAL MASS."

WE WANT THIS HAPPENING *GLOBALLY*, NOT JUST HERE.

UNDERSTOOD. WE'LL GET IT TO THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE, DON'T WORRY.

VRASSH

FAITH, I'LL TAKE WHISTLER. YOU NEED TO GET THE ORB.

HE'LL KILL YOU.

IF THAT THING EXPLODES, WE ALL DIE. I'LL COVER YOU.

GO!

HEY.

THIS IS FOR NADIRA, YOU SON OF A--

AGH!

OFF MY BROTHER!

ZARK

HELP ME FIND HER. THE LITTLE HUSSY, I'LL CHARBROIL HER--

PEARL. DO YOU SEE? DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?

IT'S WHAT MAMA WANTED. WHAT WE'VE WORKED SO HARD FOR.

AFTER ALL THIS TIME...WE'VE WON.

WHAT'S HAPPENING...? *WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?*

IT'S A...A *MAGIC PLAGUE.* I KNOW IT'S A SHOCK, BUT YOU NEED TO TAKE COVER.

MY BOYFRIEND-- HE WAS JUST HERE--

WE'LL... KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR HIM, DEAR.

IT'S ALL GONE PEAR SHAPED UP THERE.

THE BADDIES DROPPED SOME GLOWY DISCO BALL, AND, WELL, YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENED.

ALL THAT MYSTIC ENERGY, DISTILLED INTO SO SMALL A SPACE...THAT SORT OF POWER CAN'T BE CONTAINED FOR LONG.

CLEARLY IT'S NOT. IT'S LEAKING OUT AND *TRANSFORMING* THESE POOR PEOPLE. WE HAVE TO HELP THEM, RUPERT!

NO. WE NEED TO FIND THE SPHERE, OR IT WON'T MATTER. THE ENERGY WILL GROW... AND *RELEASE.*

PERHAPS THAT'S ALL TO THE GOOD. THE BADDIES WANT IT IN THE SKY WHEN THAT HAPPENS. IF IT EXPLODES HERE, WHAT MORE DAMAGE CAN IT DO?

WIPE ENGLAND OFF THE MAP, FOR STARTERS.

RIGHT. FIND THE GLOWY DISCO BALL. GOT IT.

HANG ON. NOT TO BE "THAT GIRL," BUT I'M NOT KEEN TO MELT INTO GOO. OR WORSE, GROW A HORSE'S ARSE.

NOT A WORD, SOPHIE.

IF THAT WERE GOING TO HAPPEN, IT WOULD HAVE. THE *RUNE STONES* ALASDAIR GAVE US ARE CLEARLY PROTECTING US...FOR THE MOMENT. SO *MOVE.*

ALASDAIR, WE'LL HEAD WEST.

OH... YES.

YES, OF COURSE.

WHROK

STOP *FIGHTING*, ANGEL.

I'M FINISHING WHAT WE STARTED. WHAT YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE *COJONES* TO DO.

THIS HAS TO HAPPEN. IT'S FOR THE BEST.

YEAH?

IF YOU'RE SO *PROUD* OF YOURSELF...

...*WHY WON'T YOU LOOK AT IT?*

LOOK.

GGHAAAA

YOU DID THIS.

MUMMY, IT HURTSSS--

GET AWAY FROM ME, COLIN!

OH, GOD, BABY, I'M SORRY, I LOVE YOU--

YOU TALK ABOUT EVOLUTION. NECESSARY LOSSES. BUT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT *PEOPLE.*

THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T FINISH OUR PLAN. BUFFY SHOWED ME THE *COST.*

THERE'S GOT TO BE A BETTER WAY.

I KNOW THE LOSS OF MAGIC AFFECTED YOUR MIND. YOU'RE ALL ABOUT BALANCE, AND YOURS WAS THROWN OFF.

BUT YOU'RE NOT LIKE PEARL AND NASH. YOU *CARED* ABOUT PEOPLE. I BELIEVE YOU *STILL DO.*

MAYBE THE PLANET DOES *NEED* MAGIC...

...BUT ARE YOU REALLY WILLING TO DO *THIS* TO THE *WHOLE WORLD?*

I--I--

--I HAVE TO!

YOU THINK I'M *ENJOYING* THIS? IT'S *THE WAY THINGS HAVE TO BE!*

EARTH'S GONNA *DIE* WITHOUT MAGIC! *THERE'S NO OTHER WAY TO SAVE IT!*

REALLY? IT HASN'T BEEN THAT LONG SINCE MAGIC ENDED. YOU'VE TRIED *EVERYTHING?*

OR IS THIS REALLY BECAUSE *YOU'RE* HURTING--AND YOU WANT IT TO STOP?

IS ALL THIS DEATH BECAUSE *YOU* NEED A *FIX?*

RRRRAAA

BRRMMMM

THIS *ISN'T* ABOUT YOU. *OR* ME.

I'M NOT LETTING YOU DO THIS, WHISTLER.

C-COME... BACK, DAMMIT...

YOU WON'T RUIN THIS TOO!

NNNOTTT...

...YET...

NOT...

...FINISHED...

...YET.

NADIRA WAS RIGHT!

WHRAK

WHUFF!

I SHOULD'VE BEEN AFTER YOU *SCUMBAGS* FROM THE START.

NOT GONNA TAKE MY EYES OFF THE BALL AGAIN.

GOOD.

ZRAKK

BECAUSE IT'S REALLY *LONG PAST TIME* WE WIPED YOU OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

I CAN'T I CAN'T *I CAN'T STOP IT!*

HRAAAGH!

BLOODY HELL-- IT'S THE BLITZ ALL OVER AGAIN.

OH. SOPHIE, SWEETIE, I DIDN'T MEAN TO--

NO...

"YOU'RE RIGHT."

IT'S *JUST* LIKE THAT.

THE ELITE PLAY THEIR POWER GAMES. FIGHT OVER THE RIGHT TO SHAPE THE WORLD IN THEIR IMAGE. CATCH THE REST OF US UP IN THEIR MADNESS.

IT NEVER CHANGES, DOES IT?

I DON'T SEE THAT RIDICULOUS *SHINY* THING ANYWHERE, DO YOU?

NO. AND FRANKLY, IT'S NOT AS IF WE CAN STOP THE OTHERS FROM TAKING IT.

WHAT I *DO* SEE IS AN AWFUL LOT OF PEOPLE WHO NEED *HELP.* WITH *MAGIC,* SOMETHING WE KNOW A GOOD DEAL ABOUT.

RIGHT. IF WE SEE THE BALL ANYWHERE, WE SPEED-DIAL RUPERT.

UNTIL THEN, WE TRY TO ACTUALLY DO SOME *GOOD* IN ALL THIS HORRIBLE BUSINESS.

LISTEN TO ME, LOVE. IF YOU HAVEN'T BURNT TO DEATH BY NOW, THERE'S A RATHER GOOD CHANCE YOU CAN TURN THAT *OFF.*

JUST BREATHE DEEP. REMEMBER, YOU'RE ENGLISH. *NO ONE* DOES REPRESSION LIKE US.

WELL, HELLO. AREN'T *YOU* A HANDSOME CREATURE.

HANDSOME? *LOOK AT ME!* I'M A *MONSTER!*

OH, DARLING, PLEASE. YOU'LL BE THE STAR OF THE *FURRY CONVENTIONS...*

I'M HERE, HONEY. I'LL GET YOU OUT.

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE OKAY.

WORSE THAN YOU THOUGHT, ISN'T IT?

THAT'S WHAT CHANGED MY MIND WHEN I WAS TWILIGHT. WHEN BUFFY SHOWED ME WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

WHAT IT *REALLY MEANT.*

YOU THINK I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS?

I WAS IN *HIROSHIMA,* DUMBASS.

CRASH

I SAW PEOPLE PULLING OFF BURNING CLOTHES AND *TAKING THEIR SKIN* WITH IT! I STEPPED ON BLACK CRUMBLING THINGS THAT USED TO BE *BABIES!*

IT WAS BAD. BUT *MORE* WOULD'VE DIED IN AN INVASION OF JAPAN.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY.

THE *ONLY* WAY.

EMPIRE

WHAT THE HELL--?

AH, WHISTLER! WE'LL BE DONE IN A MOMENT.

YOU FREAKIN' IDIOTS...

...WHERE THE HELL'S THE ORB?

HERE'S SOMETHING I HADN'T THOUGHT OF, RUPERT. NOW THAT WE HAVE IT...

...WHAT DO WE *DO* WITH IT?

ITS ENERGY MUST BE RELEASED...IN *CONTROLLED* FASHION.

EVEN GIVEN OUR EXPERIENCE WITH MAGIC, AND THE PROTECTIVE RUNE STONES, THERE'S GREAT RISK, MANIPULATING SUCH FORCES. YOU SHOULD TAKE COVER, ALASDAIR.

LET *ME,* RUPERT. YOU'VE JUST BEEN RESURRECTED. YOU HAVE AN ENTIRE LIFE AHEAD OF YOU. I'M OLD. I'VE LIVED LONGER THAN I EVER EXPECTED.

YOU'RE NOT MUCH OLDER THAN ME. DON'T FEEL YOU HAVE TO--

WE'RE AFTER THE SAME THING, AREN'T WE...?

I'M USELESS WITHOUT MAGIC. JUST A DODDERING OLD FOOL. IF I CAN REGAIN EVEN A MEASURE OF MY OLD POWER--

OR YOU COULD *DIE!* LIKE ALL THOSE POOR PEOPLE--

YES, BUT GIVEN MY EXPERIENCE WITH SUCH ENERGIES, I LIKE MY ODDS. AND I'M WILLING TO TAKE THE CHANCE. BUT YOU--YOU'RE *YOUNG* AGAIN! WHY--

WHY? *LOOK* AT ME!

AT LEAST YOUR *LIFE,* YOUR *LEGACY,* IS STILL YOUR OWN. I'M NO GOOD TO *ANYONE* LIKE THIS!

I *FEEL LIKE I'M GOING MAD!*

YOU KNOW, IF WE DID IT *TOGETHER*, IT MIGHT IMPROVE *BOTH* OUR CHANCES OF SURVIVAL...

THIS IS AN APPALLINGLY BAD IDEA, ISN'T IT?

BORDERING ON INSANE.

EXIMO--

ZRAKT

THERE YOU ARE.

THOUGHT I'D LOST YOU.

LUCKY FOR ME YOU STOOD AROUND NATTERING.

TEENAGERS AND OLD PEOPLE.

YOU DO LOVE THE SOUND OF YOUR OWN VOICE.

NO!

DAMN IT! FAITH, CAN YOU--

I'M TRYING!

AND FAILING.

N...

...NUH...

NEVER STOP!

NEVER GIVE UP!

GHAAA!

N-NOT QUITE GOOD ENOUGH!

SWAT

NO.

KNCH

NO!

NRAAA!

SPTCH

-IK--

NASH!!

KRAKATOOOM

SHROOOSH

WHMF!

N-NADIRA...

HANG ON. THIS... MAYBE THIS CAN FIX YOU...

I'M AFRAID IT DIDN'T WORK FOR US.

AND *TRYING* NEARLY LED TO DISASTER.

I'M SORRY, FAITH. BUT IT'S REACHING THE POINT OF NO RETURN, AND WE HAVE NO TIME TO WASTE.

YEAH.

DO WHAT YOU GOTTA DO.

THAT'S ALL I'VE *EVER* DONE, KIDDO!

IT'S ABOUT TO BLOW.

AND *YOU* TOOK OUT ALL MY FLIERS.

SO I GOTTA *IMPROVISE.*

ME TOO.

YOU ALWAYS SAID IT'S THE BIG MOMENTS THAT SHOW WHO YOU ARE.

LET'S FIND OUT.

I'M DONE *ARGUING,* ANGEL.

EARTH *NEEDS* MAGIC. THIS BABY GOING NUCLEAR IS THE *ONLY* WAY.

YEAH--A LOTTA PEOPLE ARE GONNA DIE. NO GETTIN' AROUND *THAT.*

ALL YOU DID HERE--

WHAT YOU WANT, NOT WHAT YOU NEED

PART 5

--IS MAKE SURE *YOU'RE* GONNA BE ONE OF 'EM.

FWOOSH

GNNRR!

THRNCH

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE *BALANCE.*

BALANCE *THIS.*

BRAKK

YOU'RE...*WRONG,* WHISTLER.

IT'S ALL...

...ABOUT *YOU.*

KNK

WHUH!

LOSING MAGIC--

--THREW OFF *YOUR* BALANCE.

GIVE IT BACK!

THAT'S THE IDEA.

SSHTK

HOW DO YOU STOP AN *EXPLOSION?*

ZZRRR

RELEASE THE PRESSURE.

SCHMUCK.

I *CREATED* THIS ENERGY FIELD. YOU THINK I CAN'T *PLUG A HOLE* IN IT?

I THINK YOU JUST GOT A DOSE OF *CONCENTRATED MAGIC.* I THINK YOU'VE STOPPED TWITCHING.

I THINK YOU FINALLY LOOK LIKE THE WHISTLER I USED TO KNOW.

LOOK AROUND. NOW THAT THE HUNGER FOR MAGIC ISN'T EATING AT YOU.

IT BOTHERED YOU BEFORE, BUT YOUR OWN NEED WAS STRONGER. NOW THAT YOU GOT A FIX--NOW THAT *YOUR* BALANCE IS RESTORED-- ASK YOURSELF.

IS *THIS* THE WORLD YOU WANT TO CREATE?

THESE ARE *PEOPLE.* REAL PEOPLE YOU HURT.

F-FAITH...

NADIRA?

IS *ANY* BALANCE WORTH *THIS?*

STAY WITH ME. HEY--YOU *DID* IT, GIRL.

YOU AVENGED YOUR SISTERS.

I... DID...?

HNH. ALL THAT HATE AND PAIN... FOR THIS...

YOU WERE RIGHT, FAITH.

IT WASN'T WORTH IT.

ANGEL...

WHAT DID I DO?

YOU MADE THE ORB-- YOU CAN ***DISSOLVE*** IT. LET THE ENERGY DISPERSE.

IT'S AT CRITICAL MASS. IT'LL BLOW NO MATTER WHAT.

CAN YOU MAKE YOUR MYSTIC SHELL THICKER? OR PERHAPS A LARGER ONE...SOMETHING TO ***CONTAIN*** THE EXPLOSION?

THAT'D TAKE ALL THE MAGIC I GOT IN ME. I'D BE SUCKED DRY AGAIN. JONESING.

RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED.

THERE'S NO OTHER OPTION!

EXCEPT ONE.

BR...KK

I ALWAYS SAID IT'S WHAT YOU DO IN THE BIG MOMENTS THAT SHOWS WHO YOU ARE.

SO FAR, I'M A SELFISH BASTARD.

BUT YOU KNOW ME.

GOTTA HAVE *BALANCE.*

NO!

WHISTLER...?

WHISTLER!

WHAT CAN I DO?

YOU... ALREADY DONE IT, KID.

SAVED ME FROM MYSELF.

AND THOSE TWO BILLION PEOPLE...

THAT WAS NICE TOO.

I'M SORRY.

AFTER ALL YOU DID FOR ME...

YEAH. HELPED YOU BE MORE THAN THE RULE BOOK SAID YOU COULD.

THAT'S WHAT *YOU* JUST DID FOR *ME.*

HELPED ME STOP SERVING THE BALANCE...

...AND JUST DO WHAT'S *RIGHT.*

LISTEN. ALL THE DESTINY STUFF...IT AIN'T JUST CRAP.

WELL... SOME IS. BUT SOME OF IT MATTERS.

BUT IF YOU STARE TOO HARD AT THE BRASS RING, YOU FORGET THE WHOLE POINT IS THE RIDE. AND WHO'S ON IT WITH YOU.

IT DON'T MATTER THAT YOU GET WHAT YOU WERE AFTER IF YOU WRECK EVERYTHING THAT GIVES IT MEANING.

THE PLANET NEEDS BALANCE. BUT YOU FIGURED OUT SOMETHING I NEVER DID.

YOU GOTTA FIND THE BALANCE IN YOURSELF BEFORE YOU CAN BALANCE THE WORLD.

YOU FIGURED IT OUT FOR ME. NOW COMES THE HARD PART.

NOW *YOU* GOTTA LIVE IT.

I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT, KID.

I ALWAYS KNEW...

OKAY.

PEOPLE NEED HELP.

LET'S DO WHAT WE CAN.

MANY HOURS LATER.

Emerge

ALL YOUR VITAL SIGNS ARE GOOD.

GOOD? I'VE GOT A HORSE'S ARSE!

THE MAGIC THAT TURNS PEOPLE TO STONE IS IN THE SNAKES. YOU CAN SURGICALLY REMOVE THEM. BUT YOU HAVE TO SEDATE EACH ONE OR THEY'LL BITE THE CRAP OUT OF YOU.

ANGEL.

I'VE SPOKEN TO THE SOLDIERS. THEY'VE FOUND NO SIGN OF PEARL.

WHEN NASH DIED, IT APPEARED TO ME SHE SUFFERED SOME SORT OF...*DISRUPTION* TO THE ENERGY THEY SHARED. SHE COULD BE DEAD, OR WEAKENED.

MAYBE.

"BUT IN MY EXPERIENCE...

"...IT'S NEVER THAT EASY."

ON A HAPPIER NOTE, THINGS HAVE CALMED DOWN CONSIDERABLY. I CAN TAKE OVER HERE, IF YOU'D LIKE.

THEY'RE TOGETHER, THREE TENTS DOWN.

THANKS, ALASDAIR. I SHOULD CHECK ON FAITH AND GILES.

ONE LAST THING, IF I MAY. YOU KNEW WHISTLER BETTER THAN ANY OF US.

FOR MILLENNIA, HE SERVED A CRUCIAL FUNCTION...MAINTAINED THE UNIVERSAL BALANCE. WITH HIS PASSING, I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER...

WHO WILL DO THAT NOW?

NO ONE.

WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO DO IT FOR OURSELVES.

FOOSH

AUTHORITIES CONFIRM THE OUTBREAK WAS MAGICAL IN NATURE. WHILE MANY VICTIMS ARE BEING TREATED ONSITE AS A PRECAUTION, THEY STRESS THAT THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF CONTAGION.

BEING HAILED BY SURVIVORS AS ***TRUE HEROES*** OF THOSE FIRST TERRIFYING HOURS ARE MY GUESTS NOW--

--LAVINIA AND SOPHRONIA FAIRWEATHER. YOU'VE BEEN CREDITED WITH SAVING COUNTLESS LIVES. HOW DID YOU MANAGE IT? DIDN'T YOU FEAR FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY?

OH, THAT SIMPLY DIDN'T OCCUR TO US. ASK ANYONE WHO KNOWS US--WE NEVER THINK ABOUT OURSELVES AT ***ALL.***

PEOPLE NEEDED HELP, SO WE GAVE IT.

IT'S WHAT WE DO. IT'S ***WHO WE ARE.***

HOW'S NADIRA?

THE DOCTOR SAYS SHE SHOULD BE *DEAD,* GIVEN THE SEVERITY OF HER BURNS. BUT HER VITAL SIGNS ARE STABLE... AND GROWING STRONGER.

CLEARLY SHE WAS AFFECTED BY THE MAGIC PLAGUE. SHE'S *CHANGING.*

INTO *WHAT,* ONLY TIME WILL TELL.

DID I INTERRUPT SOMETHING?

NAH. JUST ME TRYING TO GIVE G HIS HOUSE AND MONEY BACK, AND HIM BEIN' A STUBBORN SON OF A--

FAITH, WHILE I APPRECIATE NOT BEING CAST INTO THE STREET, THERE IS *NO NEED* FOR--

IT'S YOUR STUFF. YOU LEFT IT TO ME WHEN YOU DIED. YOU'RE *NOT DEAD* ANYMORE.

I INSIST ON SETTING UP A BANK ACCOUNT FOR YOU, AT THE VERY LEAST. OR...OR I SHALL *HOLD MY BREATH* UNTIL I TURN BLUE.

FINE. WHATEVER. BUT I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF. ALWAYS HAVE, ALWAYS WILL.

HEY, WE DON'T HAVE TO FIGURE THIS OUT RIGHT NOW. EVERYONE'S TIRED. WE'VE BEEN IN COMBAT MODE PRETTY MUCH FROM THE SECOND GILES WAS RESURRECTED.

LET'S GET SOME REST, AND THEN FAITH AND I CAN THINK ABOUT WHERE WE'RE GOING TO--

WHAT?

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?

I'LL LET THE TWO OF YOU TALK.

FAITH?

ANGEL...

I'M LEAVING.

I DON'T-- LEAVING LONDON? THE HOUSE?

ME.

I AIN'T MAD AT YOU. OKAY?

I OWED YOU BIG. YOU PULLED ME OUT OF THE GUTTER WHEN EVERYONE ELSE WROTE ME OFF. NO ONE'S GONE TO THE MAT FOR ME LIKE YOU. ***EVER.***

I HELPED YOU 'CAUSE I ***WANTED*** TO. EVERY STEP OF THE WAY, WITH OPEN EYES.

BUT IT COST TOO MUCH.

THE GIRLS. THE SLAYERS.

THINGS I FELT GOOD ABOUT.

THINGS THAT WERE ***MINE.***

I DON'T LET PEOPLE IN EASY. BUT WHEN I DO...I LET 'EM IN *ALL THE WAY.* DO WHAT THEY DO. WANT WHAT THEY WANT.

NO MATTER WHAT IT DOES TO ME.

THAT'S *MY* PROBLEM. I GOTTA LEARN HOW TO DEAL WITH IT. FIGURE OUT WHAT I WANT, AND HOW TO GET IT.

OR I'M GONNA END UP LIKE NADIRA. LIKE I USED TO BE.

EMPTY. EXCEPT FOR HATE.

I GET IT. AND FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'LL BE OKAY. HAVE YOU GOT SOMEWHERE TO GO, OR--

I GOT A CALL A WHILE BACK, FROM THAT CHICK *KENNEDY.* WILLOW'S EX. SHE'S GOT SOME KINDA *BLACKWATER ON ESTROGEN* THING GOING ON. SLAYERS FOR HIRE.

SHE NEEDS A TRAINER. DRILL INSTRUCTOR TYPE'A GIG. PAY'S GOOD, LOTSA TRAVEL, PLENTY OF ASS KICKING. I MIGHT LOOK INTO IT.

SHE'D BE LUCKY TO HAVE YOU.

ANYONE WOULD.

THIS AIN'T A BAD THING. WE SAVED THE WORLD. WE SAVED G.

WE'RE *STILL FRIENDS*, OKAY?

AND ONCE I FIGURE THINGS OUT, MAYBE...

I'LL BE HERE.

ALWAYS.

YOU DO REALIZE THAT NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO, WHAT YOU DO, THERE IS SOMETHING YOU WILL ***ALWAYS*** HAVE--PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR YOU.

I KNOW. AND IT MEANS A LOT.

JUST GOTTA GET TO A PLACE WHERE THAT MAKES ME STRONGER INSTEAD'A WEAKER.

FAITH...WHEN YOU GO...

...IS THERE ANY CHANCE I MIGHT ACCOMPANY YOU?

SERIOUSLY?

BEING HERE... ALL IT DOES IS REMIND ME OF MY OLD LIFE. A LIFE I CANNOT HAVE BACK IN MY PRESENT STATE. AND WHILE I LOVE MY GREAT-AUNTS--AND YOU ARE ***NEVER*** TO REPEAT THAT--

THE IDEA OF THEM AS MY LEGAL GUARDIANS MAKES ME WANT TO SELL MYSELF TO A THIRD-WORLD SWEATSHOP.

LIKE YOU, I'VE REALIZED I MUST ACTIVELY CHART MY OWN COURSE GOING FORWARD. PUT MYSELF IN A POSITION TO ACT AS BEST I CAN UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

AND IF I'M BEING HONEST, THE POINT IN MY LIFE WHEN I WAS AT MY BEST--

--WAS WHEN I WAS WITH BUFFY.

YOU WANT A RIDE TO THE STATES ON KENNEDY'S PRIVATE JET.

YES, WELL, I NO LONGER RESEMBLE MY PASSPORT PICTURE, DO I? AND WHAT WITH BEING LEGALLY *DEAD* AND ALL...

...GIVEN THE SORT OF CONNECTIONS YOU SAY SHE HAS, IT OCCURS TO ME THIS MIGHT BE THE MOST EXPEDIENT METHOD OF TRAVEL.

FINE.

PACK YOUR THINGS. I WANNA GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE *A.S.A.P.*

ANGEL. THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TELL YOU.

YOU'RE GOING TO SEE BUFFY. I FIGURED YOU WOULD.

AND YOU?

I'M HOPING YOU'LL TELL ME WHEN THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.

OR IF.

YES, OF COURSE...BUT I MEANT, WHAT WILL *YOU* DO? NOW THAT THE CRISIS IS PAST, AND I'M ONCE AGAIN AMONG THE LIVING.

YOU WERE IN QUITE A BAD STATE BEFORE, IF YOU DON'T MIND MY SAYING.

I KNOW I CAN'T MAKE UP FOR THE MISTAKES I'VE MADE...THE THINGS I'VE DONE.

BUT BRINGING YOU BACK... FIXING JUST *ONE*... I THINK MAYBE NOW I CAN *ACCEPT* IT.

AS FOR WHAT I'LL DO...I FIGURED OUT A LONG TIME AGO THAT IF THERE'S NO BIGGER MEANING, THE SMALLEST ACT OF KINDNESS IS THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD.

AND YET YOU KEPT INVOLVING YOURSELF IN BIG THINGS.

SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO.

AND SOMETIMES... IT'S LIKE WHISTLER SAID. KNOWING IT IS A LOT EASIER THAN LIVING IT.

BUT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A WHILE, I THINK I'VE GOT A SHOT.

THEY'RE ALREADY CALLING IT *MAGIC TOWN.* THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE CHANGED FOREVER. SOME IN PAIN... SOME WITH POWER THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND.

BUT OTHERS DO. THEY'LL WANT TO EXPLOIT IT.

I FIGURE THESE PEOPLE NEED SOMEBODY ON THEIR SIDE.

BACK TO "HELPING THE HELPLESS"?

THAT LOOKS GOOD ON A BUSINESS CARD. BUT IT'S KINDA REDUNDANT.

SOONER OR LATER, WE'RE *ALL* HELPLESS. AND WHEN THAT TIME COMES, WE ALL NEED THE SAME THING.

SOMEONE LOOKING OUT FOR US.

THE END

ANGEL & FAITH™

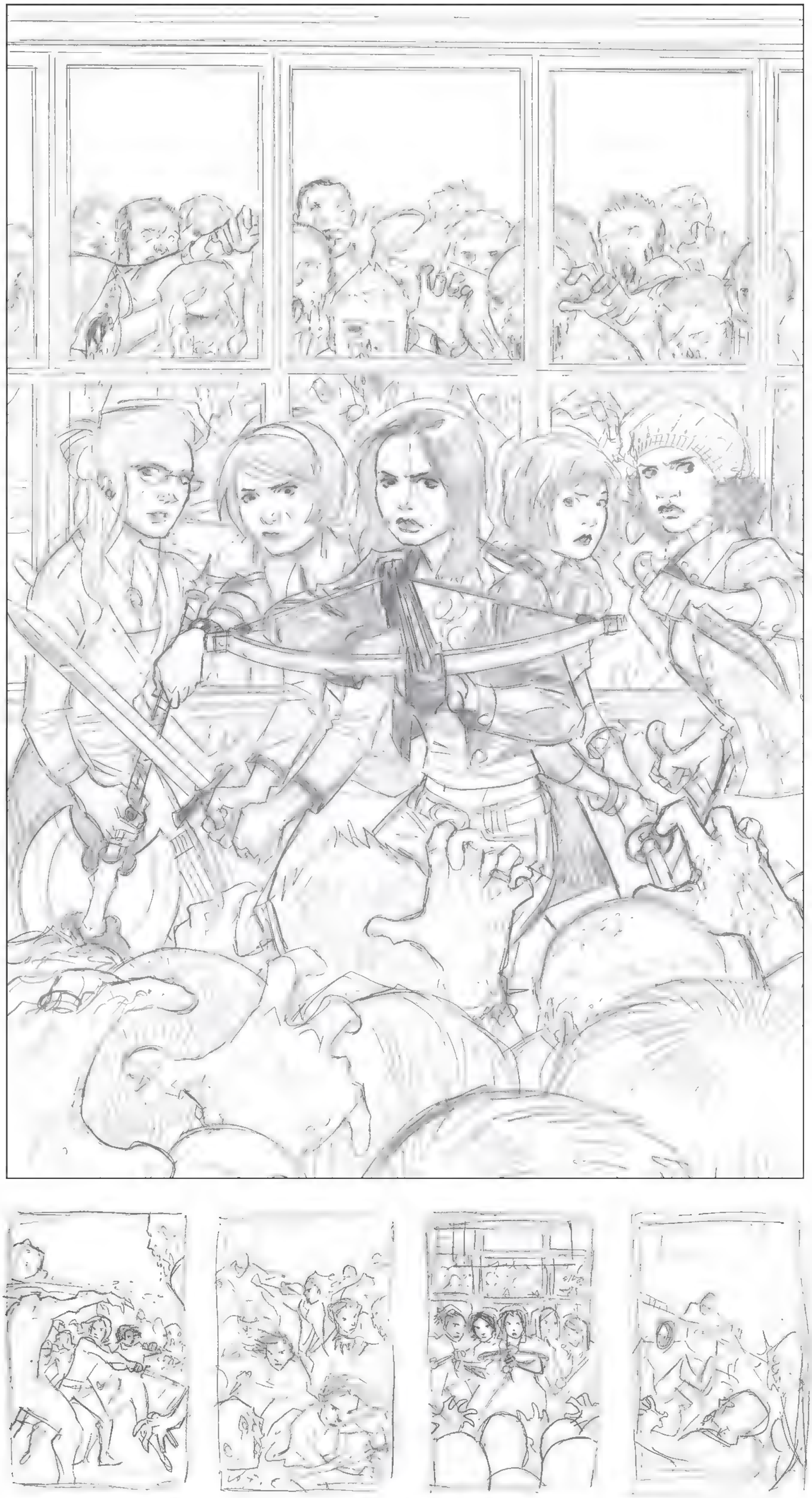
SEASON 9 SKETCHBOOK AND COVER GALLERY

Featuring art by REBEKAH ISAACS *and* STEVE MORRIS

Initial thumbnail sketches and cover pencils for the *Angel & Faith* #16 variant cover.

Nadira, a troubled Slayer, has been searching for Angel since the beginning of Season 9, looking for revenge after the sins he committed as Twilight against her Slayer sisters.

Angel & Faith #16 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson.



Initial thumbnail sketches and cover pencils for the *Angel & Faith* #17 variant cover. It's Faith's Slayers against Eyghon's zombies!

Angel & Faith #17 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson.

While searching for the Crown of Coils, an artifact needed to restore Giles's physical body, Angel and Faith encounter these cave lizards with regenerative powers. Designed by series artist Rebekah Isaacs.

To design the demon Eyghon's true appearance, Rebekah referenced the possessions that occurred in the *Buffy* television show and took festering, dripping skin to a new level.

Rebekah Isaacs ANGEL & FAITH #18 CVR B.

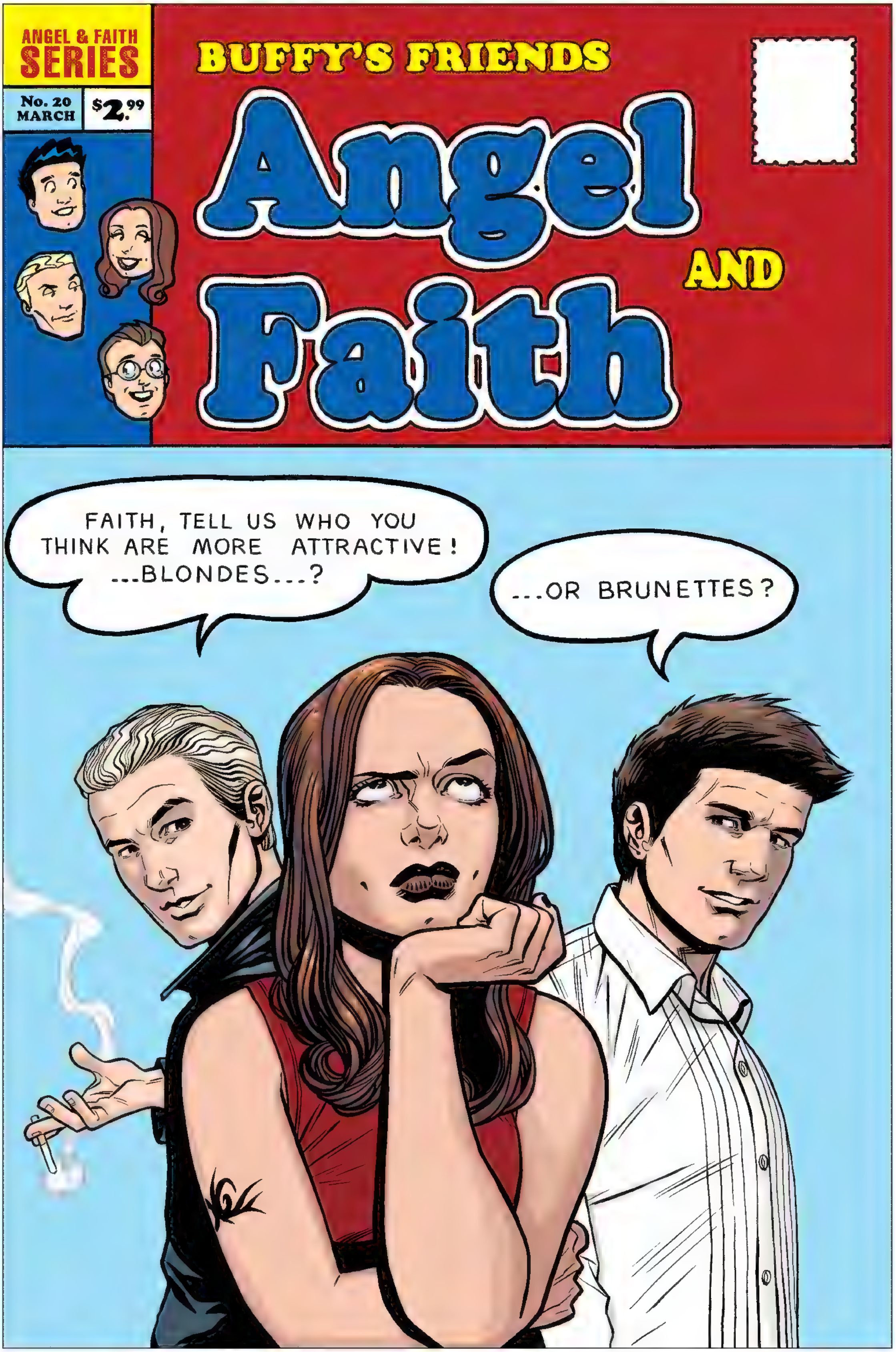
Cover pencils for the *Angel & Faith* #18 variant cover.

Angel & Faith #18 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson.

Initial thumbnail sketches and cover pencils for the *Angel & Faith* #19 variant cover.

Angel & Faith #19 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson.

Angel & Faith Volume 4: *Death and Consequences* cover art, by Steve Morris.



Angel & Faith #20 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson. An homage to the 1962 cover to *Archie Annual* #14 by Harry Lucey and Terry Szenics.

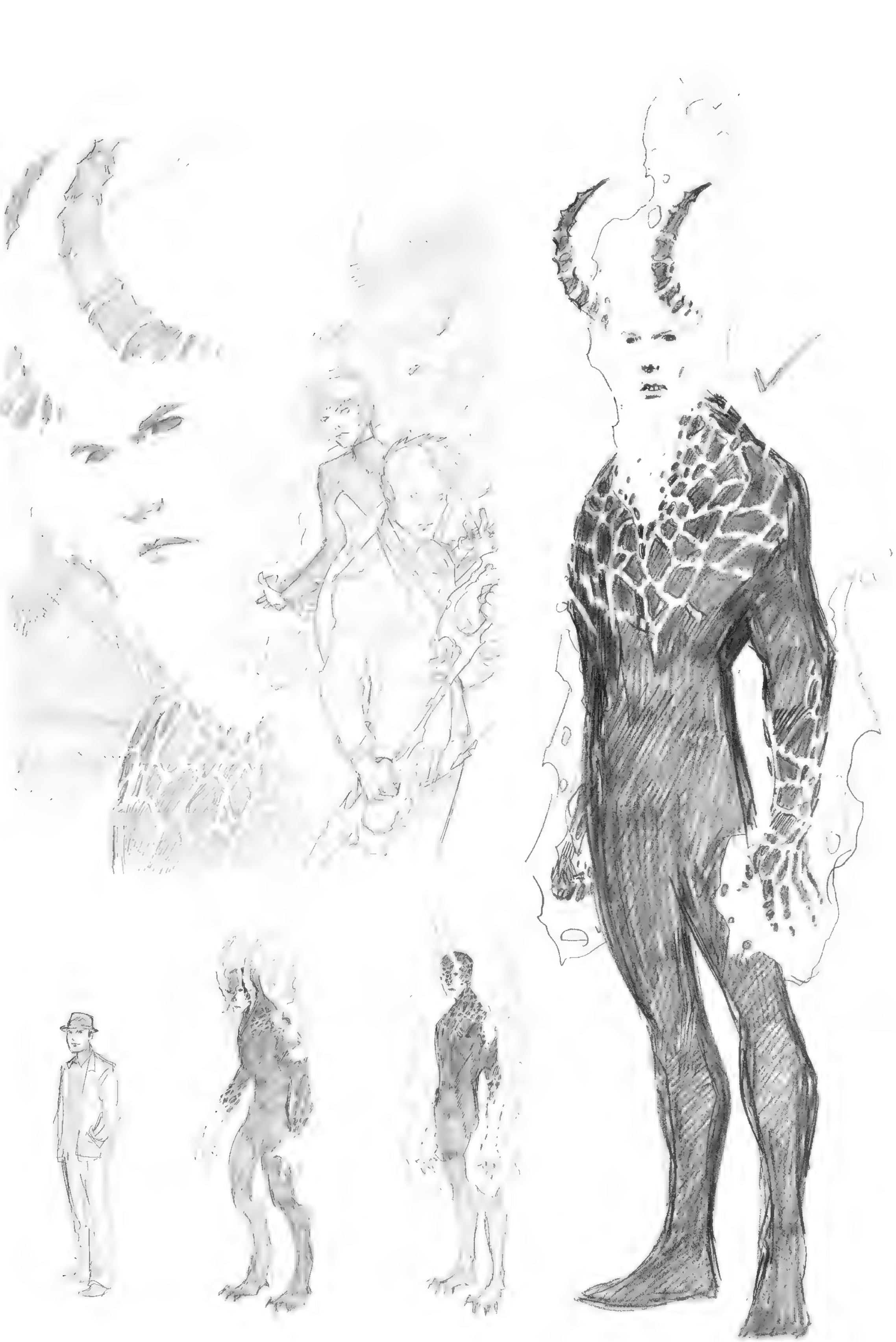
As Spike's first appearance in the *Angel & Faith* series was in issue #18, Rebekah created these headshots in order to obtain official likeness approval from Twentieth Century Fox.

Rebekah's initial sketches for Ripper (Giles in his wild youth) were created very early on in her work for Season 9, as we knew we'd be seeing Giles as Ripper at various points throughout the series.

In *Angel & Faith* #20, while Angel was somewhat incapacitated after absorbing the various pieces of Giles's soul, Faith and Spike continued Angel's quest by tracking down the Enders, demons who eat souls. Shown here are Rebekah's designs for the demons, and page 7 of issue #20, where Spike fights to maintain his own soul.

Initial thumbnail sketch, inks, and cover pencils for the *Angel & Faith* #21 variant cover. Faith vs. Pearl!

Angel & Faith #21 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson.



Cover pencils for the *Angel & Faith* #22 variant cover.

These concepts for Whistler's true demon form were provided by Rebekah for his backstory in *Angel & Faith* #15 to help our guest artists create proper parents.

Angel & Faith #22 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson.

Angel & Faith #23 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson. Though this scene didn't happen in the series, Rebekah's thumbnail sketch of Angel and Faith fighting demons while hanging on to Big Ben was too good to not become a cover.

Angel & Faith #24 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson. Angel is twirling Whistler's hat, foreshadowing the end result of their battle.

Angel & Faith #25 final variant cover art. Pencils and inks by Rebekah Isaacs and colors by Dan Jackson.

Angel & Faith Volume 5: *What You Want, Not What You Need* cover art, by Steve Morris.

CREATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Writer, producer, and director JOSS WHEDON began writing feature films and acting as a "script doctor" in the 1990s. He introduced the character for which he is most well known in his script for the original *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* film (1992).

In 1997 Whedon founded Mutant Enemy Productions so that he could coproduce the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. The series ran from 1997 to 2003, giving birth to Whedon's cultlike fan following, and led to a spinoff series, *Angel*, as well as comics series based on both shows. In 2002, Whedon produced and wrote the television series *Firefly*, which eventually led to a feature film titled *Serenity* (2005), as well as more comics. In 2008, Whedon produced and cowrote, with his brothers Zack and Jed Whedon, and Maurissa Tancharoen, the Emmy-winning online series *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog*—again leading to a comics series. Also alongside Jed Whedon and Tancharoen, Whedon produced the television show *Dollhouse*, which premiered in 2009. His most recently produced television work, which he cocreated with Jed Whedon and Tancharoen in 2013, is Marvel's *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* He wrote and directed one of the most ambitious and successful feature films to date: *The Avengers*, based on the Marvel Comics superhero team, along with its sequel, *Avengers: Age of Ultron*. He also directed, produced, and composed original music for a film adaptation of the Shakespeare play *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Comics written by Whedon include *Fray* and *Buffy* Seasons 8 and 9, both series based in the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* universe, and *Sugarshock*, all for Dark Horse Comics, and *Runaways* and *Astonishing X-Men* for Marvel Comics.

CHRISTOS GAGE is a Greek American writer of comics, television, movies, graphic novels, and video games. He is a graduate of Brown University and the American Film Institute, from which he received a master's in screenwriting. In addition to writing *Angel & Faith* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Season 10 for Dark Horse, he has provided scripts for titles including *Deadshot* for DC Comics, *Red Sonja* for Dynamite, and *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Iron Man*, and the entire forty-issue run of *Avengers Academy* for Marvel Comics, among many others. With his wife Ruth Fletcher Gage as a frequent collaborator, he has written for the television shows *Numb3rs* and *Law & Order: SVU*, and films including *The Breed*, *Teenage Caveman*, and *Paradox*. He has been nominated for several industry awards, and was the Breakout Talent winner of the 2007 Comics Nexus Awards. Recently, Gage has been writing Marvel's *Daredevil*, an original live-action web series from Netflix airing in 2015.

Artist REBEKAH ISAACS, a graduate of the Savannah College of Art and Design, got her start in comics drawing *The After Hours* for the *Twilight Zone* series of graphic novels from Walker & Co. Soon after, she began as a guest artist on *Hack/Slash* for Devil's Due Publishing before working as a series artist on *Drafted* (Desperado/IDW Publishing) and a *Sheena* miniseries for Devil's Due. Her first mainstream work was a fill-in issue of *Ms. Marvel* with writer Brian Reed for Marvel Comics, immediately followed by WildStorm Comics' miniseries revival of *DV8: Gods and Monsters* with writer Brian Wood. Since then, she has worked on titles including *DMZ* (Vertigo/DC Comics), *Magus* (12 Gauge Comics), and *Captain America and the Falcon* (Marvel). She began her work in illustrating the Buffyverse with *Angel & Faith* and continues as series artist on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Season 10. A native of Dahlonega, Georgia, Rebekah now lives in New York.

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This volume reprints the comic book series *Angel & Faith* #16–#25 from Dark Horse Comics. *Angel & Faith* is based on the television series *Angel*, created by Joss Whedon and David Greenwalt. This story takes place concurrently with the events of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Season 9, created by Joss Whedon.

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ANGEL & FAITH SEASON 9 LIBRARY EDITION VOLUME 3
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ANGEL & FAITH™

SEASON 9, VOLUME 3

Angel is leaning hard into his personal cycle of always seeking to redeem past wrongs, and after his most grave mistake yet—the murder of mentor and Watcher Rupert Giles—he has undertaken a quest to bring Giles back from the dead. Luckily, Angel has the support and friendship of Faith, a Slayer who can watch his back and also make sure he doesn't take things too far . . .

The demon Eyghon has appeared in London, giving Angel the opportunity he's been waiting for—the chance to capture the final piece of Giles's soul. For Faith, her mission to support Angel takes a turn for the worse when her Slayer comrades discover her connection to the ensouled vampire. When they unknowingly become involved with Eyghon, worse becomes worst when Slayers turn into zombies . . . and much to Angel's chagrin, Spike is called in for backup.

But just as Angel's quest comes to its final phase, the Big Bads Whistler, Pearl, and Nash unleash their own ultimate plan to release a virus that could kill billions while forcing the evolution of life on earth . . . Angel, Faith, and their network of supporters are all on deck for the culmination of Season 9.

"Interior artwork is excellent. Covers are fantastic."

—TECHNORATI

"I've said it before and I'll say it again: if Gage and Isaacs work on a comic together, I'll buy it, no questions asked. As always, good times."

—COMIC BOOK RESOURCES

"The title of this story [*What You Want, Not What You Need*] is partly wrong. This is what you want, and what you need. It's a blast! A+"

—SCIFIPULSE

"Spike really does bring the fun . . . ! Gage demonstrates his talent for writing Whedon's characters by not missing a beat with everyone's favorite blonde, British vampire."

—FANBOY COMICS

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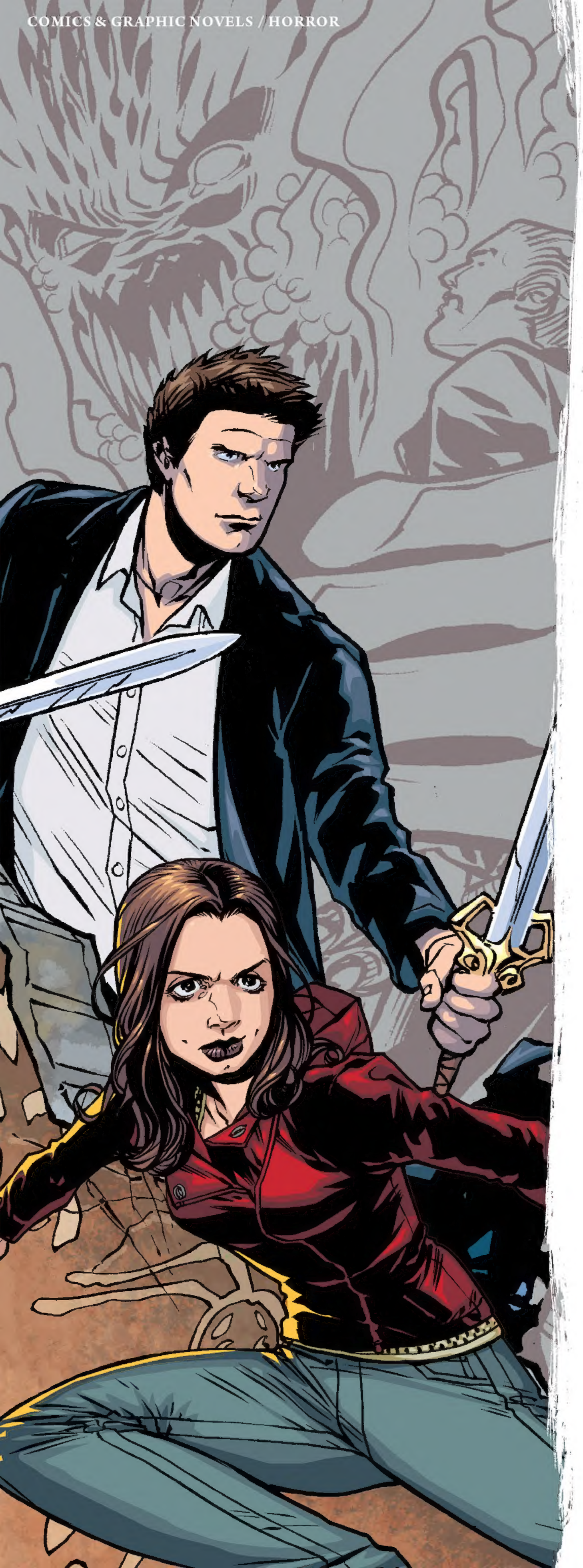

CHRISTOS GAGE

REBEKAH ISAACS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
JOSS WHEDON

ANGEL & FAITH™

SEASON 9 VOLUME 3

"Gage and Isaacs have turned out not just a good media tie-in comic, but a good comic, period . . . *Angel & Faith* has been consistently strong."

—COMIC BOOK RESOURCES

Angel and Faith continue to delve into Rupert Giles's past in order to bring him back to the present. Now they find themselves looking at the Watcher's darkest days—as the wild youth Ripper. The demon Eyghon has appeared in London and is giving Angel the opportunity he's been waiting for: a chance to capture the final piece of Giles's soul. For Faith, her journey supporting Angel's mission to resurrect Giles takes a turn for the worse when her Slayer comrades discover her friendship with the ensouled vampire. And as Angel's quest comes to its final phase, the Big Bads Whistler, Pearl, and Nash unleash their own ultimate plan, bringing Angel, Faith, and all the help they can get together for a battle they might not have a chance at winning.

Writer Christos Gage (*Avengers: The Initiative*) and series artist Rebekah Isaacs (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Season 10) conclude Angel and Faith's impossible quest with style, strength, and heart. This library edition contains the fourth and fifth arcs of the *Angel & Faith* series and features an expanded sketchbook section.

"If you loved the *Angel* TV show, do yourself a favor and catch up on [*Angel & Faith*]."

—COMIC BOOK THERAPY

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